METAPHYSICAL PLURALISM

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I declare that this thesis is my own composition and that all of the work is my own.

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ABSTRACT

"Metaphysical Pluralism" is an analysis of the conditions and causes for the multiplicity of metaphysical systems. It argues for the viability of metaphysical pluralism — the view that there is more than one plausible metaphysical system, and that there can be good reasons for these various views. Without arguing a specific theory of metaphysics, this thesis defends the ability of metaphysical knowledge to remain critical and rational in the face of the sceptical claim of relativism.

Chapter One and the Appendix discuss the more general issues of conceptual pluralism as found in the social sciences. Ideas of autonomy and relativism from Wittgenstein and Winch are criticized, and it is concluded that there is no a priori guarantee that conceptual schemes are free from internal confusions, have determinate boundaries or exist in a fully developed and formal way. These conclusions are then applied to specific issues in the philosophical arguments of metaphysical systems. Chapter Two and Three do this. The historical conditions which develop into pluralism are described in Chapter Four as a permanent feature of the human condition and of knowledge as such. Chapter Five then explains how ultimate pluralism does not destroy the rationality or the purpose of a metaphysical framework, although any form of absolute, context free knowledge is denied. Pluralism is interpreted and defended as a midpoint between relativism and absolutism, emphasizing both the constitutive character of conceptual schemes and the larger context of motives and values.

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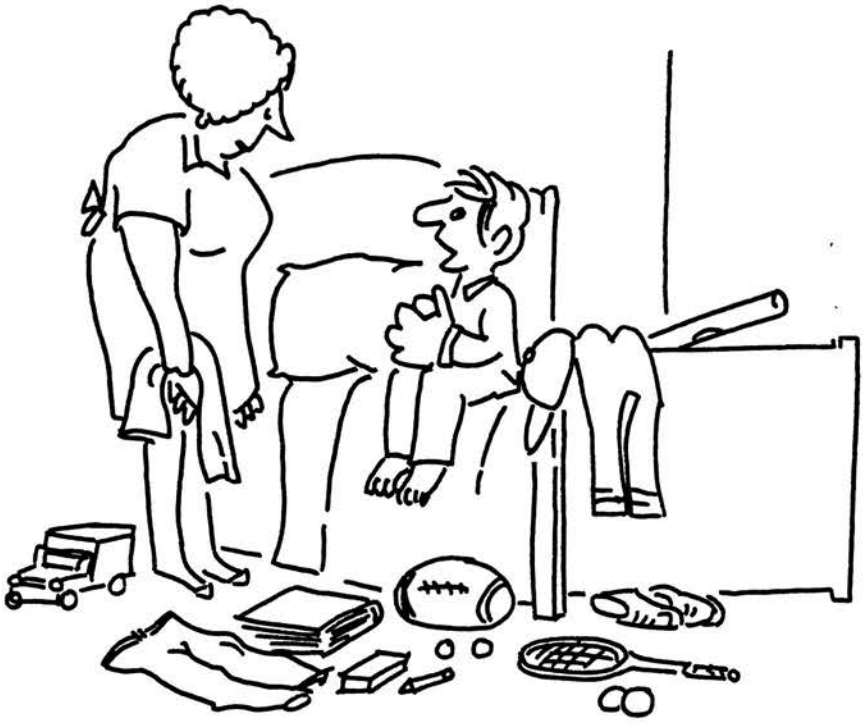
I want to thank Mr. John Llewelyn of the Department of Philosophy, Edinburgh University, for his critical skills in reading and discussing my work on this thesis over the past five years. A deep appreciation also goes to my parents whose spiritual and financial support I have always enjoyed. I dedicate the understanding I have gained from my studies to my father.



"To the adult mind this room appears disorganized, but to the mind of a child everything is logically arranged for use."

The true method of philosophical construction is to frame a scheme of ideas, the best one can, and unflinchingly to explore the interpretation of experience in terms of that scheme. The importance of philosophy lies in its sustained effort to make such schemes explicit, and thereby capable of criticism and improvement.

A. N. Whitehead
Process and Reality

It is criticism that, recognizing no position as final, and refusing to bind itself by the shallow shibboleths of any sect or school, creates that serene philosophic temper which loves truth for its own sake, and loves it not the less because it knows it to be unattainable.

Oscar Wilde

That the human mind will ever give up metaphysical researches is as little to be expected as that we, to avoid inhaling impure air, should prefer to give up breathing altogether. There will, therefore, always be metaphysics in the world; nay, everyone, especially every reflective man, will have it and, for want of a recognized standard, will shape it for himself after his own pattern. What has hitherto been called metaphysics cannot satisfy any critical mind, but to forego it entirely is impossible.

Immanuel Kant

Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics

PREFACE

In recent years most authors writing about metaphysics begin with an apology. It seems that the traditional philosophical goal of a comprehensive view of reality has, in recent times, fallen short of academic respectablity. Metaphysics is often scorned as mere armchair speculation, soft-thinking, a more poetic than scientific discipline. In an age dominated by claims of objectivity and quantified analysis, an age that finds security in specialization, there is suspicion and insecurity in traditional wisdom; we find the modern temper eschewing speculative and systematic metaphysics.

I think, however, that there is more implicit trust in the comprehensive view than many philosophers will openly admit. Although we would be surprised to find a philosophy that fit every aspect of reality, we nonetheless criticize a position as soon as we discover anything in it which destroys its prospects for doing just that. This general form of argument is a call for metaphysics.

In the following pages I attempt neither an apology for nor a criticism of metaphysics. I neither reject the idea of metaphysical knowledge nor argue a specific theory of metaphysics. Rather, I wish to explain an important historical observation; I wish to analyse and describe the conditions and causes of the existence of a multiplicity of metaphysical systems. My plea is for an appreciation of past and ongoing philosophical practices. If correct, my analysis will conclude a legitimate viability for the plura-

lism of metaphysical systems — a position which neither denies rationality by an argument of relativism nor assumes a single correct world-view of absolute knowledge.

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INTRODUCTION

Metaphysics and rationality.

Philosophy is a dialogue. It exists in the individual, in his search for justified belief and commitment; it exists between individuals, in argument and criticism; and philosophy as dialogue exists in the community, in an academic tradition and cultural existence. Philosophy as dialogue with itself is thus seen in history — in schools of thought, through the language and literature of philosophy. But philosophy is also more than communication; philosophy transcends its dialogue and addresses questions of the comprehensiveness and ultimate truth of reality. The style and form of philosophy may exist as dialogue but its content is best described as the search for truth.

A traditional discipline within philosophy is metaphysics; and in metaphysics the philosopher's arguments and conclusions go beyond the dialogue which expresses them. The beliefs of metaphysics are meant to be universal and eternal; the ultimate nature of reality, being as such, is the proper study of metaphysics.

Philosophy has a profound goal in its search for truth. Traditional and academic metaphysics is written in the mode of having reached this goal. Each philosopher writes his view of the world as The One and Only True metaphysics. What the history of philosophy shows us however is a continual disagreement among philosophers about the fulfilment of their goal. More significant than the question of whether any one metaphysical system is actually true is the

fact of the continuation of the dialogue of philosophy in its search. This fact is emphasized when I describe philosophy as dialogue.

Although disagreement does not prove a metaphysics is false, it is an indication of needed criticism. In his Discourse Descartes observes that "philosophy . . . has been studied for many centuries by the most outstanding minds without having produced anything that is not in dispute and consequently, doubtful". Similarly, Hume in his Treatise remarks about philosophy that "there is nothing (in it) which is not subject to debate, and in which men of learning are not of contrary opinions. Disputes are multiplied as if everything was uncertain." The failure which the history of philosophy continually points to is not that any one philosophical system is true or false but rather that philosophers have failed to agree on which is true or false.

When describing the pluralism of philosophical systems we find throughout history we are inclined to say that everyone has his own opinion, as if the picture of metaphysics were subjective, personal and autobiographical only. Doubt is not directed at the truth of the position for it is often argued "That may be true for him but not for me." With this response the arguments at hand are often dismissed, views are not refuted or defended; a relativism is then accepted. Diversity is seen as a matter of the lack of agreement and thus criticism of diversity is not a question of truth itself. Criticism is rather a question of the

relation of the philosopher with other philosophers and the philosophical community. The dialogue of philosophy is thus seen to be a more significant part of the context of its practitioners than part of its goal. It is at least in this community that the dialogue must begin. And today, of course, the debate continues. It is <u>in</u> this debate that metaphysical systems exist; a phenomenological description of this existence will constitute my analysis of an argument for the viability of pluralism for metaphysical systems.

Not only the validity but the plausibility of an argument's conclusion depends on the content of the premisses. The nature of the terms and concepts in my thesis become more specific as they are developed in analysis and argument. I will thus refer to my account of pluralism in metaphysics as my "thesis-argument".

<u>Pluralism</u>.

By 'pluralism' I refer to the existence of the multiplicity of different metaphysical systems. By the 'viability of pluralism' I mean the realization that the failings of a system — that alternatives exist, and that all philosophers do not accept a common conceptual system — does not destroy its value as philosophical inquiry. Pluralism does not prove to be a rejection of the metaphysical argument or the metaphysical ambition of philosophy in general. Viability thus refers to the reasonableness, the pragmatic rationality inherent in each of the various

metaphysical systems, how each is argued, compared and criticized.

The following paper then is a defence of the rationality of pluralism for metaphysical systems. I argue against the view that underneath the prima facie pluralism lies some One Framework of true metaphysical knowledge. Although the historical existence of pluralism may account for an interest in this subject, especially in cross-cultural studies, social anthropology and comparative religions, it is an important tenet of my thesis-argument that a more pervasive sense of reason maintains pluralism. It is no accident that there is more than one metaphysical system. Indeed, the existence of pluralism is as important to philosophy as the existence of more than one novel or poem is to the body of English Literature.

Framework reconstruction.

By 'metaphysics' I refer to metaphysical systems or frameworks. The motive and goal of a rational and critical vision of the whole of human experience and of what is 'really real' is expressed by metaphysics. The works of Plato, Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas, Descartes, Spinoza and Leibniz represent traditional metaphysical constructions of this vision. By metaphysics then, I mean those self-conscious intellectual activities and products, articulated and formalized in language, as found in the history of academic philosophy. I do not wish to include the 'metaphysics' one might describe as 'implicit' in the behaviour of a primitive people.

For example: it is often thought that different metaphysics exist behind or are hidden within the rituals and practices concerning death for the ancient Egyptian, Chinese and American Indians. We might understand death in such varying cultures as the slowing down of time, time standing still, and, by death, time being transcended. What one finds in the burial sites of these different peoples suggests these three philosophical notions of time and death. The question then is whether or not such distinctions constitute a basic metaphysics. I think not. Although I do not deny distinct world-like-views characterizing behaviour and its products, there need not exist in this context any such metaphysics. For a metaphysics must make universal claims, a conscious construction of principles and categories applicable to all or to the highest genera of entities as such. These principles and categories are not premisses or presuppositions of ordinary language, local structures of meaning (e.g. the way American Indians bury their dead), nor do they report its deep structure. Analysis of the local principles of a language-game or area of experience must be distinguished from the reflective totalization which gives rise to metaphysical principles. An 'implicit metaphysics' then is only the application of principles in one's immediate situation, where local frameworks are used in practice. As such, metaphysical claims are not made.

My discussion in the first chapter on understanding, pluralism and the relativity thesis in the social sciences will show that even anthropologists have difficulties 'reading

off' the so called implicit metaphysics in the behaviour of an alien culture. I will show that there is more than one possible interpretation of a given set of practices. Between behaviour and its description, and thus between behaviour and implicit metaphysics, there is a necessary interpretation. And interpretation is more than re-presentation; it is also creation. Only when articulated in traditional and academic structures, the metaphysical frameworks my thesis will be dealing with, can a metaphysics be maintained in a critical and thereby plausible way. And it is only by this critical approach of reason that metaphysics can exist. This then is to suggest that arguments and their conclusions cannot be distinctly separated.

Above I stated that metaphysics is that philosophical motive and goal of a rational and critical vision of the whole of human experience and of what is 'really real.' As a metaphysical system, this vision is expressed in human activity, participation in the 'dialogue' of traditional and academic philosophy discussed above; it concerns contemporary problems and contemporary methods, and it takes place in a tradition or history of interests and philosophic literature. Within this perspective of past and present philosophy, any metaphysical system will be an action in and a reaction to its context. Part of the whole of human experience that is to be accounted for includes the struggles, failures and gained wisdom of past metaphysics. We see the activity of metaphysics in its background, and we see the construction of a metaphysical system as a

"re-construction" of problems and answers challenging and inspiring the philosopher. Metaphysics is thus presupposed and created at once. It will be the issues of questioning, criticizing and the reconstruction of metaphysical frame-works that the following discussion will deal with. My arguments are based on the conditions of human finitude.

Pluralism and choice.

When I speak of 'pluralism' I have in mind that we find ourselves presented with rival structures of meaning, and have no rules for choosing among them. In our modern world we are confronted with various schemes of values and patterns of acting. Our tradition includes competing scientific theories and philosophies, with their many onto-logies and epistemologies. All of these can be considered as kinds of rules which guide our action, thought and speech. Our problem is that we have too many sets of rules; they conflict with one another. Sometimes they are out-right rivals, as with competing scientific theories; some-times the relations are more complex, as with science and religion. It would be convenient if we could appeal to a higher set of rules to settle such conflicts, but we find disagreement on the higher level as well. We want the rules that produce The True picture of the world, or The Right way to act, but there is no agreement on how to find them. It is a common enough opinion today that we will never find them, that pluralism will always be with us, and thus an epistemological and moral relativism prevails. On

this point, Karl Popper remarks that "the main philosophical malady of our time is an intellectual and moral relativism, the latter being at least in part based on the former."[1]

Rationality is present with pluralism.

Despite pluralism, we like to take our own view seriously. We like to tell ourselves to be rational, and this often means to follow the rules instead of our whims. But how can we be rational when we have to choose the rules themselves? The obvious answer is to claim we pick our rules arbitrarily for no reason. If that sounds too anarchic, we can say that we are determined by some larger process to have the rules we do. Neither arbitrary choice nor brute receptivity allows room for any real self-criticism, and both make us fundamentally irrational as there would be no reason for the rules. Both are also clearly false to our experience. We do manage to reduce plurality of possible rules to some kind of unity in our lives without feeling either totally determined or totally arbitrary. As we find ourselves in the world, our point of view does have meaning: we are committed to certain beliefs, critically and tentatively hold some while rejecting others. The continuity and development in this complex of beliefs gives our point of view its sense of reason. There seems to be some sort of rationality to our choices.

When I speak of 'rationality' I mean it in the sense Plato insisted on: some non-arbitrary and self-critical

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[1]Karl Popper, The Open Society and Its Enemies 5th edition, vol. 2, Addendum One (New York: Harper and Row, 1966), p. 369.

method of settling questions about values and rules, a method whose results are not determined by what we happen to want at the moment. Plato was afraid of arbitrary choice; as far as he could see, it led in the end to personal and social violence.[2] Among many other things, the Republic is a treatise on the method for finding rules. Since then, philosophers have suggested many such methods.

If we have a non-arbitrary method, it makes sense to expect it will give us unique and necessary results. If it did not, we would need still another method to decide among the many results. It is a natural transition to think of rationality as involving a certain guaranteed content which includes The Set of Rules. Thus rationality should eliminate pluralism.

Yet history keeps telling us that both pluralism and rationality exist. Despite all the 'rational' methods, we still face a pluralism of sets of rules. Neither theories of pluralism nor those of rationality seem accurate pictures if taken by themselves.

This tension in history is part of the larger problem of finding a balance between creativity and discipline, a problem which has been with us since Plato banished the poets and resounds again in Nietzche's call for us to take the responsibility of creating ourselves. As a problem, pluralism and rationality is especially important with political and moral issues. In this study, I have chosen to deal with the plurality of metaphysical frameworks. Somewhat removed from (if not more basic than) social debate in

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[2] One philosopher who holds quite the contrary is Paul Feyerabend, Against Method: Outline of an Anarchistic Theory of Knowledge (London: New Left Books, 1975).

politics, religion and morality, my choice seemed to me more easily surveyable than the complex practical and social version of the problem. However, to help appreciate the more general problem as well as pay attention to the intellectual background in which the pluralism of metaphysics exists, I begin this study with a brief exposition or recent history of relativism in the social sciences. But my specific arguments will be restricted to metaphysics, an important area in its own right; and will concern the perennial question of the status of metaphysics.

The notion of frameworks.

I have cast my discussion in terms of the metaphor of a 'framework'. We speak of the framework of a house, or of a narrative. A clay sculpture may have a framework inside it, while my books on the wall have one outside and around them. These make us think of a framework as something relatively rigid and fixed, giving other kinds of things their position or stability. A ridge of mountains against the sky, or the skeleton of a building can be called frameworks. They surround us, and create the space that shape our paths. The grid of streets in our city and the grid of colour words in our language are frameworks that lay out where we can go and what we can say.

In this study I will be concentrating on metaphysical frameworks, the most general conceptual unification of experience. But no matter what kind of frameworks we speak of, the metaphor itself suggests two lines of questioning.

The pattern of city streets or of rooms in a building constrains me to walk in certain ways. Is this true as well for cultural and intellectual frameworks? Do these encompass and define me? Can I get outside my framework in order to be aware of it, criticize and, if necessary, change it? Can I get outside of all frameworks? On the other hand, I can rearrange the bricks and boards of my bookshelf. Looked at this way, frameworks seem to be tools I shape at will. Can I choose and change them arbitrarily? What criteria, if any, do I use? In the end, these two lines of questioning do not really conflict. Although the one worries about our being imprisoned and the other worries about our sovereign freedom, both concern the same activity. Both lines of questioning converge on the issue of our ability to criticize and reconstruct our frameworks. It is this issue which will occupy my present study on metaphysics.

Plurality and criticism are with us.

The exact nature of the frameworks I will be considering will be explained in the second chapter; they correspond to a classic metaphysical system or to lists of ontic commitments. But before going into detail, there is an important methodological point to be made. I will not be dealing with these frameworks as they might be revealed to some detached Martian anthropologist. I will be concerned with multiple frameworks presented to an individual or a community as a problem to be dealt with. We can and do find ourselves faced with a plurality of frameworks and

have reasons to want to choose among them. By posing the problem in terms of a multiplicity of frameworks which is already presented to us, we can bypass the problem of whether we can ever adequately understand another's framework. However, if different frameworks cannot really be compared then they never really conflict either. Each defines its own self-enclosed world. If we picture frameworks in this way, we will indeed be forced to choose between The One All Inclusive Framework and a pluralism of self-enclosed worlds with no rational decision possible among them. In general, I think such an approach envisions frameworks as more abstract, fixed and formal in character than they are, and fails to appreciate the wider context within which they exist.

I will be concerned, then, with conflicting frameworks seen as conflicting. This is how metaphysics appears to exist throughout the history of philosophy. I will argue that this appearance is accurate; the conflict is not a cover for The One Framework, nor does it involve self-legislating wholes which never really touch each other. In a way, this amounts to a defence of philosophy's usual state of disarray filled with competing theories and ongoing debates.

Over the past decade, the philosophy of science has witnessed increasing discussion of issues related to my topic. Although this study does not contribute to it, I feel that this study does extend into meta-philosophy the issues raised by the philosophy of science: the realization that prevalent modes of thought are not historical

enough, and that 'reason' need not have the timelessness of a formal deductive system. To say that reason is historical and pluralistic need not destroy rationality nor give up the question of framework choice. I will use the notion of 'reason' in an evaluative, critical and practical manner. For the judgment of rationality is one way in which we think about people, their actions and their beliefs. Specifically, 'rationality' pertains to the ways in which we come to hold our beliefs. Gordon Reddiford describes rationality as pertaining also to our attitudes to the evidence for holding beliefs and to the procedures we adopt in maintaining or rejecting beliefs. "Thus to ascribe rationality", Reddiford says, "is to comment on our success or failure in continuing to subject them to scrutiny, in attempting to maintain consistency particularly when we express our beliefs in action." [3]

Rationality <u>in general</u> pertains to knowledge, where knowledge is systematic interpretation of experience. And if knowledge is not arbitrary imposition of meaning on things but rather the appearance of things in meaningful contexts, rationality pertains to man's objective and sharable experiences. Although there is no conceptual scheme or language common to all men, it does not follow that all contexts of meaning are expressions of isolated subjectivities. And so my defence of pluralism does not amount to a relative subjectivism; rather, the legitimacy of pluralism lies in the fact that only in the conditions of subjectivity — par-

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[3] Gordon Reddiford, "Rationality and Understanding", <u>Philosophy</u> 50 (1975), pp. 19-35; p. 23.

ticular frameworks, linguistic practices, etc. — does the possibility of knowledge exist. Only in such contexts do experiences of objectivity become intelligible. It will be with this above sense of critical reason that I argue for the viability of metaphysical pluralism.

Thesis outline.

In the above Introduction I discussed metaphysics and the pluralism of metaphysical systems. The following terms were also explained: 'framework reconstruction', 'viability of pluralism', 'rationality' and 'thesis-argument'. My study begins by emphasizing that pluralism and rationality are both present in our dealings with metaphysical frameworks.

In the first chapter, Relativity and Understanding, I discuss the more general background of conceptual pluralism as found in the social sciences. Ideas of relativism, conceptual autonomy and the One Framework (or a universal science of man) are discussed as well as problems of cross-cultural criticism. At the end of my thesis the Appendix further develops this area of conceptual autonomy and relativism. Specifically, I argue that [the existence of] an ongoing linguistic practice may contain inconsistencies and contradictions; ordinary language or a religious mode of discourse, for instance, may be criticized. I also argue that this criticism is possible because conceptual schemes do not exist in a purely formal sense, that a common ground of intelligible rule-following pertains to all frame-

works, and that the boundaries and extent of conceptual schemes are not a priori defined. From these arguments it follows that internal criticism or detailed revision of a conceptual scheme is possible as well as more general evaluations by external criticism.

Although metaphysical pluralism is less urgent and more academic than cultural pluralism, the problem and issues of the critical understanding of alternative frameworks are similar. The discussion in the first chapter then leads, in the next, to a specification of the structure of metaphysical frameworks.

After offering a structural analysis of metaphysical frameworks, Chapter Two, Metaphysical Frameworks continues with several illustrations of conflicting frameworks from the history of philosophy. Frameworks are also characterized in a less formal sense, as relating data from ordinary language and local frameworks, reinterpreting this data and thus offering a more comprehensive view of the world. Metaphysical frameworks are ultimate in this comprehensive sense and yet, it is argued, they exist in a larger though non-conceptual context as well. Chapter Three, Limits and Legitimacy of Frameworks, is a study of this larger context. I argue that the function of such constructed frameworks and systems is seen to be in response to the uniqueness of the human condition, its finitude and historical perspective. The goals of metaphysical systems are described as attempts to resolve basic disunity in experience; as a result, appearance and reality are distinguished, and a unification

and comprehensive criticism of experience is made.

Chapter Four is A Defence of Pluralism. In it I argue that pluralism is a permanent feature of the human situation and that various methods of doing away with pluralism cannot succeed. Although the history of philosophy shows us a continual conflict of metaphysical frameworks, many philosophers have claimed that underneath this pluralism lies some One Framework; it is believed that such methods as dialectical and transcendental arguments, analysis of ordinary language, and so forth can uncover this larger framework. I defend the ultimacy of pluralism and reject the appeals to these various methods.

Once pluralism is established as a permanent feature I then argue that we are not lost in a relativism of autonomous conceptual schemes. Chapter Five, Reason and the Extent of Frameworks, shows that in pluralism rationality is not lost. This is done by examining the function of frameworks and analysing the conditions which give rise to framework construction. I argue that we do not have to choose between an all-encompassing rationalist or transcendental framework and a plurality of self-enclosed, incomparable frameworks among which no rational judgments are possible. Both these alternatives share the presupposition that frameworks exist in no larger context, and a picture of man as endowed with some indeterminate pure power of receptivity. In order to develop a middle position that allows for both pluralism and rationality, I develop a theory of metaphysical frameworks which emphasizes the larger although non-conceptual context

in which they exist and I describe more accurately the nature of our subjectivity in its dealings with frameworks.

The metaphysical activity of reflection has its own goals which, together with a shared ordinary language and the data frameworks interpret, furnishes the general criteria that allows us to have reasons for framework choices. The purpose of constructing a framework can be fulfilled in varying degrees, and thus frameworks can be more or less justified. This justification is a balance between elements of relativism and objectivity; seen as expressions of human finitude, justification is also a balance between pluralism and rationality.

A false picture lies behind both the claim to possess the One Framework and the opposing claim that no reason for framework choice can be found. This is the image of our subjectivity as an indeterminate power which can assume the role of a pure detached observer. Against this view I argue for a degree of non-passive involvement with the data and facts of our experiences. Although subjectivity can be described abstractly as a self-reflective process, no subject actually exists without contingent determinations; and these determinations cannot be changed by fiat even when we are aware of their contingency. These then provide concrete determinations of our general framework criteria, but their contingency means that pluralism cannot be eradicated. This does not exclude self-criticism, since the interplay of reflective totalization and the many local areas of language which are what they are independently of any total

framework provides a way to be self-critical without having to step outside all frameworks. That is, the problem situation provides (in the very grounds of the conflicting frameworks) a non-arbitrary standard for comparison and evaluation. Thus we can reject misleading descriptions of ourselves as either totally sovereign over or totally constituted by our frameworks.

I then suggest that the idea of a Pure Subject functions as a "regulative ideal"; although inconsistent with the conditions and possibilities of metaphysical knowledge, a regulative ideal does express a practical need to unify experience; it has a psychological role, and originates in our desire for life in a stable world, a world of fixed meanings. Only by an abstraction from the dialogue of philosophical inquiry does this motive for criticism falsify itself in the form of an inconsistent ideal. I end Chapter Five with several remarks about the validity of the arguments in my thesis. Then, in the Appendix as I have already described, there is a critical follow up to my introductory chapter, specifically concerning views of Wittgenstein and Winch; its arguments run parallel to the thesis-argument I maintain about rationality, criticism and metaphysical pluralism.

Chapter One

RELATIVITY AND UNDERSTANDING

Social and cultural systems are more relevant and immediate, particularly politics and ethics, than metaphysical systems. Although not necessarily different in kind, they do provide a more common expression of the issues of pluralism and relativity. I begin with a brief survey of these issues as found in the social sciences. As a variant on metaphysical themes, this survey is primarily exposition; in the Appendix, however, I further develop a critical view on this discussion which is a direct application of the arguments presented in the main text of my thesis.

First I discuss relativism as a methodological recommendation, and as an epistemological theory; I then examine it on its own terms and in comparison with what seems to actually take place. It is emphasized that the autonomy of conceptual schemes is a philosophical thesis which needs further defence. I then conclude with several critical remarks establishing the starting points of my own analysis of metaphysical pluralism.

Cultural studies and the relativity thesis.

Peter Winch is a proponent of cultural relativity. In "Understanding a Primitive Society" Winch maintains that world-views are autonomous and thereby immune to external or cross-cultural criticism.[1] To properly understand an alien

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[1] The position outlined here is argued by Peter Winch in Section II of his article "Understanding a Primitive Society" American Philosophical Quarterly 1 (1963), pp. 307-324. It is also reprinted in Rationality, ed. Bryan Wilson (Basil Blackwell, 1970), pp. 78-111.

society the anthropologist must make an explication of the concepts and actions as they are found to be intelligible in that society. For Winch, this means that the criteria of rationality are internal to the practices in question. Moreover, it means that each conceptual scheme has its own and unique concept of rationality. It is a necessary condition of rationality that there be norms, but the existence of any system of norms is sufficient for rationality. Without criteria of intelligibility, there would be no possible correspondence or conflict between word and action; there would be no possibility of compatibility or contradiction. Even if a language has no term for a concept of rationality, one must be implicit and govern the use of that language. When an inference or judgment is properly made, it is comprehensible because of the concepts and logic peculiar to the language and culture in which that judgment is made. And, as this language and culture may be very different from that of the anthropologist, then, to understand certain actions and beliefs found in that culture, the anthropologist must describe the rules and concepts of the language as they are intelligible to the participants of that culture. It would be wrong to attempt cross-cultural evaluations, argues Winch. If the rules of intelligibility are internal to the particular discourse then clearly the anthropologist examining an alien society must not impose his norm of rationality where in fact a different one exists. Interpretating an alien society in this manner, however, is no easy task.

Often the anthropologist fails to make explicit alien concepts and is then tempted to claim that the beliefs and

practices described are 'child-like', 'silly', and perhaps 'irrational', and that such beliefs are simply false. Winch, of course, rejects this type of evaluation, this 'conceptual imperialism', and is critical of anthropologists for failing to give due consideration to the differences in the norms of rationality. It is in this manner that Winch argues that the beliefs and practices of witchcraft and magic among the African Azande should not be considered irrational if compared to the norms of Western thought. In particular, Winch attacks the views of Sir Edward Evan Evans-Pritchard.[2]

Evans-Pritchard discusses the Zande culture and concludes that although many of their beliefs and actions are fully integrated into their everyday life, nonetheless much of the Zande practices are irrational and many of their beliefs are false. Winch correctly observes that this criticism is based on scientific ideas and practices, and that the Azande conceptual scheme does not represent reality as it is known to our Western culture. But this comparison, and indeed the Western criteria of intelligibility, is irrelevant to the Zande concepts. It is rather the Zande criteria of reality which must be applied in understanding Zande behaviour. Winch states: "Reality is not what gives language sense. What is real and what is unreal shows itself <u>in</u> the sense that language has. Further, both the distinction between the real and the unreal and the concept of agreement with reality themselves belong to our language."[3]

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[2] Evan Evans-Pritchard, <u>Witchcraft, Oracles, and Magic Among the Azande</u> (Oxford University Press, 1937).

[3] Winch, <u>op cit.</u>, p. 309.

Therefore the Zande conception of reality cannot fail to correspond to 'reality' because reality is made relative to their language. And this reality, Winch concludes, is shown by the use to which these practices and beliefs are put in the people's lives.

The fact that our language contains the terms 'magic' and 'witchcraft' does not mean that when these terms are applied to certain concepts and activities in an alien society, that both the alien society and our own must thereby share the same substantiating concepts. Winch believes that Wittgenstein's analysis of 'family resemblance' applies here, and that the Zande concepts of magic and witchcraft may indeed be quite different than concepts with the same name as found in our language. In our culture, for instance, behaviour based on magical beliefs may be correctly considered irrational and the beliefs of magic considered contradictory and false. Such valuation, however, is not based on an independent and objective reality but rather on our expectations of what is intelligible. And for the Azande, the intelligibility of the world is different than our own. Winch then points out a crucial difference between our notion of magic and that of the Azande.

And this difference is, Winch suggests, the relation to the social life in which magic occurs.

> Concepts of witchcraft and magic in our culture, at least since the advent of Christianity, have been parasitic on, and a perversion of other orthodox concepts, both religious and, increasingly, scientific. To take an obvious example, you could not understand what was involved in conducting Black Mass, unless you were familiar

> with the conduct of a proper Mass and, therefore, with the whole complex of religious ideas from which the Mass draws its sense. Neither would you understand the relation between these without taking account of the fact that Black practices are rejected as irrational (in the sense proper to religion) in the system of beliefs on which these practices are thus parasitic.[4]

Winch argues that the practices of witchcraft and magic in our society are not independently intelligible, but have sense because of a context of previous ideas. The notion of black magic cannot be discussed without a comprehension of the Christian concepts from which black magic is a product; and that is to say, black magic has an "essential reference" to these prior concepts.[5] Therefore, in our society the notion of magic might well be shown to be irrational; it may involve the denial of the very concepts which are necessary for its own intelligibility.

In contrast, the Azande notion of witchcraft has no 'essential reference' to other, more fundamental concepts. For them, witchcraft and magic play well accepted, central and common roles in their lives. Evans-Pritchard states that " ..... their mystical notions are eminently coherent, being interrelated by a network of logical ties, and are so ordered that they never too crudely contradict sensory experience."[6] And he is aware of the distinction that the Azande use explanation in terms of witchcraft to explain "why events are harmful to man and not how they happen."[7] Evans-

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[4] Ibid., p. 310

[5] Idem.

[6] Ibid., p. 312. Winch quotes Evans-Pritchard.

[7] Ibid., p. 311.

Pritchard's confusion lies in not being content with elucidating the differences in the two concepts of reality involved; he insists that our concept is correct, and the Azande are mistaken. This is a confusion, Winch maintains, because concepts like 'reality' and 'correctness' are inextricably intertwined with one another, and with the form of life, the culture in which the concepts occur.

Winch's position is that there are no context-independent criteria of what is real or correct. This is argued in a number of specific cases. Evans-Pritchard has shown that the Azande believe that witches suffer from an inherited organic condition which is passed down along the gender lines: the sons of a male witch are witches; and the daughter of a female witch are witches. To the Azande, this means that if a man is a witch then he inherited this characteristic from his father. Witches are believed to have in their bodies a 'witchcraft substance' which may be found by a post-mortem examination. If, however, a male dies and is found to be a witch, it is <u>not</u> assumed that any of his sons are also witches. To us, it would seem that all male members of that clan are witches, if one is. Yet the Azande do not believe, or act, or even recognize this conclusion. Indeed, their behaviour is such to suggest that they implicitly believe this conclusion is false. Is this observation then sufficient ground for charging the Azande with irrational behaviour? Evans-Pritchard thinks so. Winch disagrees; because, he suggests, it is only for us, not the Azande, that the problematic conclusion follows. We charge the Azande with failing to take account of the logi-

cal necessity of the case; but the inference is only 'necessary' to one who accepts the logic of our own culture. And it is the universal applicability of our logic which should be questioned, not assumed. Thus for Winch the argument against the Azande is circular and begs the question. Winch believes that any such attempt to criticize or evaluate social or linguistic practices from outside involves the conceptual error of applying irrelevant criteria.

Evans-Pritchard explains the Zande failure to notice the unacceptable conclusion (as it would be in conflict with their actions) by the fact that the Azande "have no theoretical interest in the subject."[8] That is, they do not find occasion to draw deductive inferences about other members of the same clan as an identified witch. Winch argues that this lack of interest in theoretical questions is perfectly justifiable, because "Zande notions of witchcraft do not constitute a theoretical system in terms of which Azande try to gain a quasi-scientific understanding of the world."[9] The concepts of witchcraft and magic serve a practical and immediate function, and are constituted by these activities and not conceptual or formal analysis.

Central to Winch's analysis is the claim that different concepts of rationality are possible. He argues that we must take account of this possibility when trying to explain the behaviour of a member of an alien culture. Winch writes: "If <u>our</u> concept of rationality is a different one from his, then it makes no sense to say that anything either does or does not appear rational to <u>him</u> in <u>our</u> sense."[10] And he

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[8] Evans-Pritchard, <u>op cit</u>., p. 25.

[9] Winch, <u>op cit</u>., p. 315.

[10] <u>Ibid</u>., p. 316.

concludes: " . . . we cannot assume that it will make sense to speak of members [in another culture] as discovering something which we have also discovered; such discovery presupposes initial conceptual agreement."[11]

Winch is firm in his position against criticism or appraisal of other societies. The understanding which the anthropologist seeks involves bringing forth not only the rules of behaviour and concepts in the language of an alien culture but must, and this is most important, also recognize and appreciate the point to the rules and concepts. What we have to learn from comparative studies is the possibility of different ways of making sense of human life, and of interpreting the purpose of human actions. The path to 'wisdom', Winch maintains, in the study of alien cultures is through "fundamental concepts", which he calls "limiting concepts". Winch writes: "Their significance here is that they are inescapably involved in the life of all known human societies in a way which gives us a clue where to look, if we are puzzled about the point of an alien system of institutions."[12] Such fundamental factors as birth, copulation, and death are so central that " . . . the very notion of human life is limited by these conceptions."[13]

Internal cultural studies and criticism.

In the previous section I outlined Peter Winch's thesis of cultural relativity. By explaining certain behaviour and belief in an alien society by explicating the language, rules and concepts of that society, Winch concludes that not

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[11] Ibid., p. 317.
[12] Ibid., p. 322.
[13] Idem.

only the motive of behaviour but the very intelligibility of such behaviour depends on those rules, concepts and practices. This means that world-views are immune to external criticism by maintaining their own criteria of rationality. World-view autonomy, based on the plurality of norms of rationality, is not, however, an absolute isolation as there are certain 'limiting concepts' basic to all human culture. These basic conceptions take on a variety of forms and thus characterize each society.

Winch's argument for cultural relativity has further consequences. Criticism and evaluation cannot cross conceptual boundaries. This must apply to intra-cultural discourse as well for here too we have differing conceptions and descriptions of an intelligible world. Not only are linguistically distinct cultures immune to cross-cultural criticism, but so are the linguistic areas of science, religion, politics, and history within one culture. Statements in any one discourse cannot be evaluated by reference to the criteria of any other.

Religion is an area where the diversity and differences in beliefs and actions are most obvious. Here, Winch's position would suggest that the intelligibility, consistency and even truth of religious beliefs and statements must be determined by the 'logic' peculiar to the religious discourse in question. If the meaning of a word is given by its use, and if we can describe the word's usage, then it must have meaning. And if standards of coherence, rules of inference and criteria of truth are employed in a linguistic practice, then their employment must in some sense be correct, since

they do in fact function. Therefore the most that one can do from outside such a self-sufficient mode of discourse is map its structure so as to show what the rules are that govern it. To criticize would then be to misconstrue the nature of linguistic practices. The actual usage of religious terms is thus taken as normative for its appraisal and analysis. There can be no fundamental and independent attack on religious discourse.

A proponent of intra-cultural relativity is Norman Malcolm. In his article "Is It a Religious Belief that 'God Exists'?" Malcolm argues that philosophers distort the logic of religious discourse when they discuss the question whether God exists.[14] It is argued that the most central and basic religious belief is not the belief <u>that</u> God exists but rather belief <u>in</u> God. As one would expect, the belief that God exists is problematic. However, Malcolm asks what difference it would make whether one held that belief or not? It does not seem that this belief could enter into any form of life, Malcolm maintains, unless it is coupled with a belief in God. Indeed, it would not be possible within the Judao-Christian tradition, to believe that God exists without also believing in Him. For within that tradition God is real and central to men's lives; belief in God involves trust and faith, awe and fear; it is a fundamental belief. Malcolm then asks: "Would a belief that He exists, if it were completely non-affective, really be a belief that he exists?" [15]

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[14] Norman Malcolm, "Is It a Religious Belief that 'God Exists?" in <u>Faith and the Philosophers</u> ed. John Hick (St. Martin's Press, 1964), pp. 103-110.

[15] <u>Ibid</u>., p. 107.

It is central to the concept of God within our tradition that there be this logical connection between the two beliefs. A belief in God's existence simpliciter, independent of any attitude toward Him or the fact of His existence, would be of no philosophical interest; there would be no meaningful context to justify or deny criticism. Such belief would not reflect the religious situation in which the notion has meaning. An independent analysis would fail to uncover anything substantial (except, perhaps, the analyst's own presuppositions).

Thus it is no surprise that philosophers have met with little success in formulating arguments to prove the existence of God. Malcolm states: "Arguing for the existence of God . . . appears to be an activity in which people make up the rules as they go along . . . there is no agreed-on right or wrong in this kind of reasoning."[16] That is to say, the belief that God exists is one that we cannot grasp unless it is placed in the context of the religious belief in God.

Malcolm maintains then that there can be no relevant evidence for the belief that God exists; the Old Testament does not offer evidence for that belief, he observes, but rather assumes belief in the God of the Jews. In fact, we do not know what would count as evidence that God exists, nor would we know what to do with it if we had any. There is no question of verification or falsification of such a belief. It is true that some of the beliefs involved in

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[16] Ibid., p. 108. For a criticism against the view that no theological proof is religiously relevant see James King, "Fideism and Rationality", New Scholasticism 49 (1975), pp. 431-450.

the religious belief in God are expectations about the world; but such a belief is held " . . . in such a way that no fact of experience could falsify it."[17] So what might be called the factual belief, the belief that God exists, is not a profitable object of philosophical analysis, according to Malcolm.

If nothing would count as a refutation of the Christian belief in God then neither would a proof for it appear relevant. Thus belief is not to be understood in terms of its formal and cognitive content alone. We are to address our analysis to the meaning of the belief in God. To raise the distinct question whether in actuality God does or does not exist is to misunderstand the 'logic' and 'reality' of religious discourse.

What must be realized is that religious statements have meaning within a particular form of life, and not outside it; it is appropriate to analyze the role they play in the form of life, but it is not possible to criticize the form of life as a whole. It makes no sense to ask for a general justification of the criteria of intelligibility themselves within the language; they can only be applied as a part of religious discourse. If we remove concepts from their context we abstract them from the human phenomena which underlies them, and thus change their meaning. There is no neutral ground on which to stand to evaluate religious beliefs because their significance lies in the linguistic context where they are used. Winch writes: " . . . in discussing language philosophically we are, infact, dis-

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[17] Malcolm, op cit., p. 109

cussing what counts as belonging to the world. Our idea of what belongs to the realm of reality is given for us in the language that we use."[18] There is no way (because it is claimed meaningless) to determine whether criteria of reality themselves are 'valid' or 'true'. For, according to the theory of conceptual relativity, there is nothing for them to be valid or true of apart from their own determinations. To attempt such valuation is merely to impose the criteria of one mode of discourse on another.

Another defender of religious autonomy is W. D. Hudson. In his book on Wittgenstein he argues that it makes no sense to attempt to evaluate the claims of religious discourse, for that would involve criticizing them from an absolutely neutral standpoint; it would require that we stand outside all conceptual schemes whatever.[19] And this is plainly impossible. Hudson writes:

> . . . we must say of religion in general, and theism in particular, what Wittgenstein said with wider reference, 'Our mistake is to look for an explanation where we ought to look at what happens as a proto-phenomena.' . . . like any other conceptual scheme, a religion is based logically upon presuppositions, and is bound logically by frontiers; the former must be accepted, and the latter respected, if the game is to be played or the form of life taken up.[20]

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[18] Peter Winch, The Idea of a Social Science (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1958), p. 15.

[19] W. D. Hudson, Ludwig Wittgenstein: The Bearing of His Philosophy upon Religious Belief (Richmond, Virginia: John Knox Press, 1968).

[20] Ibid., p. 67.

This is the claim that locutions within any particular realm of discourse are immune from criticism by other realms. For anyone to challenge this autonomy would be to deny conceptual presuppositions, which would be merely to oppose them with his own presuppositions. No argument can then show one set of constituent premisses, concepts, or criteria more valid than any other. Hudson concludes:

> We have neither justified nor discredited theism in any ultimate sense. The difficulty is to conceive of what would be involved in doing so . . . it would see that it is an illusion to think that philosophy can do more than reveal its presupposition and draw its logical frontiers. That presupposition is God and those frontiers mark off talk about God from other kinds of talk.[21]

It is important to note that the immunity to criticism also eliminates possible defence or proof of the basic concepts. For instance, it would be impossible, on this line of argument, to obtain a logically demonstrative proof of the existence of God (or of anything) because a logical deduction only explicates what is already contained in the premisses; it can add nothing new. Thus any valid argument which concludes that God exists would be based on premisses which contain the necessity of God's existence; no such premisses would be acceptable, however, to the unbeliever or atheists. The only logical arguments which would serve the purpose are those which cannot be used as one must thereby believe (in accepting the premise) before one can be

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[21] Ibid., pp. 67-68.

compelled by reason to believe. Only if one was not aware of the implications of accepted premisses would a proof be useful, but then the proof only brings out (it does not establish, as to change an atheists to a believer) belief in the conclusion.

An example of such attempted proof is the traditional cosmological argument of Aquinas, a valid, deductive proof. The argument is acceptable (if it is considered a sound argument, with true premisses) only to those who already implicitly accept a theistic world-view. This theistic way of talking is the very use of the terms 'necessary' and 'contingent', which are central to the argument. For to use the concept of contingent in Aquinas' sense is to state a question that can be answered only in terms of a necessary being, namely God. So the argument cannot be persuasive to those who are unprepared to accept its conclusion. The non-believer would consider the required premisses false and therefore the proof could not establish the truth of the conclusion. Formal analysis (or proof) does have a function, however, of clarifying and expounding the logic of religious belief; and this is the function of religious argument in general. In a sense, then, ultimate justification lies in the defining authority of religion, the Bible; and this is, once again, not persuasive unless one accepts that authority. The ongoing practices of religion are thereby claimed to be self-sufficient and immune to outside criticism.

Cultural studies.

A theory of understanding has been set forth by Winch and others maintaining that conceptual schemes have an autonomous existence. In the study of comparative societies, this means that we must understand and evaluate the alien culture on its own terms. The language usage in a given world-view community carries with it the justification and explanation of the truth and rationality of its constituent concepts, beliefs and respective human actions. This argument applies to any mode of discourse, for intracultural as well as cross-cultural studies. I have outlined how religion, on this account, must be understood within the context to which religious utterances and beliefs take place; and, that to impose an external standard, say, to test religious claims on scientific standards (that is, to judge the beliefs from a different conceptual framework), would fail to grasp the issue of proper analysis. An abstraction from the initial context into another falsifies and changes the concept or belief in question. Theology has a grammar or logic of its own and this is not subject to criticism or evaluation by any other standards.

If conceptual schemes are autonomous, critically isolated forms of discourse, then, it has been argued, there can be no context-free vantage point for comparing and thus favouring one conceptual scheme over another. This is so because judgment must take place within a given discourse and therefore must assume the point of view of that conceptual system. One system is not true while another false, nor are varying systems approximations of the same reality. Rather, a

language and its conceptual activity create the intelligibility of reality. And this is not a subjectivism; an independently real nature is not affirmed by claiming it unknowable. The idea of an intelligible reality is culturally bound while the idea of a context-free objectivity is misconstrued.

As stated, the position of relativism is strange sounding because it seems to talk about what cannot be mentioned. Conceptual relativity as presented here is a theory of how beliefs and activities in various cultures and disciplines should be understood. It contrasts with what many people in fact do. It is not a descriptive theory, though description is its recommendation; it is prescriptive and methodological even though it strives to be non-imposing. In fact, however, it has imposed quite a deal. The exact nature of the working presuppositions of any conceptual scheme has yet to be explained or analyzed; this means that the autonomy argument has not yet been shown conclusive and thereby the thesis of non-critical understanding remains a recommendation only. Conceptual imperialism, however, also must be proved if this is the alternative. We still must make philosophical sense of the conceptual relativity thesis. My own position, once again, is someplace between autonomous pluralism and The One True conceptual scheme.

Relativity as a recommendation.

The meaning of the cultural relativity thesis cannot escape the bounds of the society which asserts and accepts

its recommendation. It cannot be claimed that, as a theory, relativism is true about all societies; for truth is, the relativist wants to maintain, strictly relative. This presents an awkward situation: if relativism is true then we cannot consistently claim that it is appropriate to apply this view of interpretation to a culture or conceptual scheme different than our own. That is, the claim that there are different realities for each different conceptual scheme cannot be made consistently, and cannot be made without reaching beyond the bounds of our own conceptual capacities. We can only make claims about our reality. Thus the relativist must question the applicability of his recommendation.

I suggest that this difficulty will clear, however, if we probe deeper into the consequences of the thesis. In doing this, one may remark that as a working hypothesis for cultural studies, relativism is unique to 20th century European and American societies. It has become of increasing interest and development since the 1920's, in both philosophy and social anthropology. And, if this theory derives from our conceptual scheme, as no one would deny, then we must (to be 'consistent' with the thesis) inquire into this context as well as alien societies; we must examine our motive for the theory as well as base our studies of other cultures upon its recommendation. This meta-theoretical problem is more philosophical than anthropological; the difference, though, is one of degree and not of kind if the theory is to survive criticism. The social anthropologist, of course, need not worry about meta-theoretical explication;

only the validity of his work depends upon it, not the value or purpose of his work.

To understand and demonstrate the theory of cultural relativity (not as a mere method practiced by the anthropologist but) as a conclusion about the nature of man and his comprehension of the world, we find that relativism is a consequence of our liberal ideology; the theory reflects contemporary sentiment and debate about the nature, control and development of our own democratic and industrialized society. Let me explain.

In our society 'democracy' is a central concept which characterizes much activity and organization. It is also, in an epistemological sense, a form of scepticism. We are aware of the fallibility of judgment. This awareness has grown to a degree which now casts doubt on authority. Fallibility plus the further awareness that in our culture there exists an abundance of alternative views in most matters from religious belief to historical explanation, suggests to us the consequence of a 'democratic epistemology', a fundamental privilege for the individual point of view. Moreover, it is believed that this is justified because there are (truly) many legitimate points of view, each appropriate to the individual. It is even fashionable, at least in ethics and religion (and even in some theories of science), to say there is no absolute truth, no moral or religious norms or codes valid for all men in all cultures. One who claims contrary to this is considered offensive, misguided, narrow minded and arrogant. Our ideology, then, is not

only to be tolerant of others in areas of varying opinion, but is to claim that nobody has or could have a monopoly of truth. In democracy, truth is shared; truth is made relative and places the ultimate authority of belief in the individual conceptual scheme, society, or person.

In the Azande culture, by contrast, there is little if any alternative explanations of the various aspects of their intelligible world. Here tradition takes control (and responsibility) over the individual. Where there is no apparent alternative there is a compulsion of acceptance; there is, with no alternative present, no possible doubt, no possible scepticism. The Azande would not dream up the relativity thesis. But in our culture, diversity and scepticism are common. The relativity thesis is, perhaps, a result of this diversity and alternative awareness. What better way to manage one's way through complicated and diverse society than to tolerate differences and to understand variety as legitimate.

If each society and indeed each mode of discourse has its own criteria of truth and rationality, then one should expect that without theoretical reflection there would be a tendency toward conceptual imperialism — the imposition of one's concepts and notions of truth to all problems of understanding. Autonomous structures of knowledge are, in a sense, 'absolute' but relative and finite forms of knowledge. It is not the case that all societies maintain the relativity thesis. Indeed, most people in alien cultures simply believe the 'truth' of their point of view.

Unenlightened relativism, an understanding without philosophical reflection or ideological disputation in this line of thought, does tend toward the naive projection and universalization of one's own beliefs and practices. It is not uncommon for a first reaction to judge an alien society in terms of one's own more familiar ways of doing things.

However, because this interpretation of the theory of understanding is itself culturally bound, we find the potential conflict of the universalization of relative truth no bother when we maintain a view of tolerance. Relativity may then be a mere rationalization as witnessed by the numerious authors expressing the thesis in a number of ways. The temptation to accept (and indeed the acceptance of) relativism precedes criticism or justification of that point of view. This has a striking similarity to the potential conceptual conflict in the Azande belief about death discussed earlier, but this time it is us that face the theoretical problems to solve.

Relativity as a prejudice.

It should now seem consistent with the claims of relativism that the view be judged intelligible on its own ideological prejudices. And not, it is noted, on the assumption of context-free applicability. For it is only with the assumptions of realism that relativism is made to seem inconsistent by claiming a universal thesis from a particular world-view. The relativity thesis is not a direct result of scientific methodology, it is not the conclusion of empirical investigation but is rather a different conceptual fiber than that found in science. The apparent criticism

of contradictory self-reference is not valid within the democratic epistemology discussed above. If the basis of the relativity recommendation is conceptual prejudice and if the theory is intellectualized prejudices, then there must be an alternative to which the criticism is directed from or is in comparison to; viz, scientific realism.

Now, society is not static. The thesis of relativism has had a steady development over the past fifty years in Western academics. Before this, the conceptual prejudice was, as mentioned, scientific realism (resulting in conceptual imperialism, where analysis and evaluation of alien ideas is based on the assimulation of the observer's point of view, a naive extension and imposition of one set of concepts upon another). This theory assumes that the observer's perspective is true for himself as well as true "of the world in general" — meaning the world was independently characteristic in the same manner as it is known to be characterized by the observer. Other views of the world were simply mistaken. This theory is labelled 'ethnocentrism' — the interpretation of all cultural phenomena in terms of categories applicable to one's own society. The reason for this may be the natural inclination but need not always be naive as I've mentioned. Indeed, relativism is a reaction to a powerful and attractive theory.

The alternative to relativity.

Ethnocentrism can be both a manner of approaching cross-conceptual studies as well as a developed theory of under-

standing. In contrast to relativism, the apparent differences in the variety of cultures and conceptual schemes is found intelligible by implicit and deep rooted universal categories relating not only to the particular society's conception of the world but to an essence of man. Rationalized ethnocentric exploitation in comparative social studies is thus not all critical; it can lead to a theory of human nature. The diversity of culture can be seen grounded in principles common to all cultures through this human nature.

A good deal of effort has been spent along these lines by philosophers and social anthropologists. Basic general laws and categories would serve as parameters with the universal system of interpretation. The variety of cultures could be explained by special considerations — e.g. geographical conditions, historical influences — and, like in the natural sciences, fields of specialization would develop. Cross-cultural terms such as 'trait', 'institution', 'culture', 'sub-culture', 'belief' would function much as "mass", "motion" or "velocity" are used in physics. From these, more limited terms like 'kinship', 'manners' and 'morality' would then be introduced. Methods employed by this cross-cultural discipline would consist in the 'comparative method', in functional analysis, and in typological analysis. Once the nucleus of the basic categories of culture are assembled, a genuine view of the more pervasive dimensions of the activities of man would become apparent. Man as an object of study would follow. For instance, the phenomenon of morality could be accounted for, not from the

highly contingent enterprise of any given moral system, but from general laws explaining such a universal need and condition for the expression of a moral system.

In the 19th century the possibility of such an approach for the study of man was uncritically assumed as an outgrowth of the scienticism of Spencer and Mill popular at the time. More characteristic of this century, however, is the examination of difficulties with this view and, in more recent years, developing theories in reaction to it. Simply put, in trying to expound the ideas of ethnocentrism when rationalized as a universal theory of understanding, it was found that there were a number of hidden influences not compatible with the goal of the theory.[22]

There are a number of tacit assumptions made when one tries to develop a universal science of man. Discussed by most advocates of universal anthropology is the view that maintains some 'human nature' linking all men together by the same 'generic essence'. That man has such a nature or essence is defended in Thomistic-Aristotelian communities as the basis for what they term 'philosophical psychology'. Other, more persuasive assumptions are made.

It is generally assumed, for example, that the sciences are structured in a way that relates each to every other, and that this relation is invariably one of subsumption. Physics is considered the basic science subsuming all others under it. The subject matter of physics is the least possible domain of concern for science. It is, therefore, universal in its grounding all other sciences. The para-

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[22] See for example: Bronislaw Malinowski, A Scientific Theory of Culture (Chapel Hill, 1944); Ralph Linton, The Study of Man (New York: 1936); and Melville Herskovits, Man and His Works (New York: 1948).

digm of explanation for the other sciences is physics. Following physics is chemistry, physiology, biology, psychology, anthropology and sociology, in decreasing order of scope and generality. This kind of thinking, then, can be found behind many of the attempts at a general science of man.

Another possible assumption in the construction of a universal science of man comes from the other physical sciences. Many of the invariant factors listed above are similar in tone to the jargon of biology and psychology. There have been attempts, for example, to show that Freudian categories apply to all men even though the way, say the Oedipus complex would show itself would depend on local conditions. Even Biology, almost as a tryanny of genes and endocrines, presents what many consider a suitable context for the study of man. Here the techniques of chemistry and physiology can be enlisted and variations clearly demarcated. Psychological categories would also be employed. Laws about what all men in certain conditions would do play an important role. For example, correlations between population density and aggressive behaviour could be explained in terms of psychological stress and the causes of it. In this fashion wars and other less conspicuous rituals could be explained effectively.

Beside assumptions about the domain of the sciences, there are assumptions about culture itself. These may be putatively descriptive and uninterpreted accounts of what culture is supposed to be.[23] G. P. Murdock maintains that

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[23]For a historical account of the problem of defining 'culture' see Raymond William's article "Culture and Civilization in The Encyclopedia of Philosophy vol. 2, ed. Paul Edwards (New York: Macmillian Publishing Company, 1967), pp. 273-276.

culture is learned by process of inculcation and is not innate or transmitted biologically; it is social in that learned habits are shared by members of the organized social aggregate; it is ideational in that group habits are conceptualized in institutions and readily distinguishable from idiosyncratic habit; it is gratifying in that it satisfies the basic biological and psychological needs of the members of the aggregate; it is adaptive in that it obeys laws of evolution; and it is integrative, i.e. it strives for wholeness and unity.[24] Murdock concludes:

> If the seven fundamental assumptions outlined above, or even any considerable proportion of them, are valid, then it must necessarily follow that human culture in general, despite their historical diversity, will exhibit certain regularities or recurrences which are susceptible to scientific analysis, and which, under such analysis, should yield a body of scientific generalizations.[25]

Closely linked with this kind of approach is the view that culture has certain 'functional prerequisites' which are necessary conditions for a society to maintain intact. The conditions are sometimes outlined as sociological, relating to the maintenance of social ends; other times, as biological, relating to the survival of the organism. But even these views assume certain other ideas. For instance, what constitutes 'society' must be understood. Here, one view is that society is like an organism, while another

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[24] This account of culture is presented by George Peter Murdock in "The Cross-Cultural Survey", Readings in Cross-Cultural Methodology ed. Frank Moore (New Haven, 1961), pp. 45-54.

[25] Ibid., p. 53.

(proposed by Beattie and Emmet) is that 'society' is a conceptual tool and way of organizing experience.[26]

Problems of the alternative to relativity.

I have briefly mentioned some of the assumptions made by those who would like to put anthropology on a functioning par with physics with respect to subject matter. In attempting to develop the idea of a universal science of man, a number of problems have been revealed. It has been recognized that the task set for themselves is not easy. In this section, then, I want to mention some of the recognized problems internal to the enterprise.

One of the proponents of the alternative to the cultural relativity thesis I mentioned was J. H. M. Beattie. In his discussion of the proposed science of man he does recognize some difficulties. Beattie states that "even the most matter-of-fact descriptions are shot through with abstractions, usually unanalysed 'common sense' ones."[27] Consequently, "the appropriateness of any particular framework of explanation must be a hit-or-miss affair, subject to continuing revision and reformulation."[28] Despite these reservations, Beattie does not see in them any impediment in principle to carrying out the general study of man in society. He notes that social anthropologists study (i) what actually happens, (ii) what people think happens, and (iii) what they think ought to happen.[29] In one sense,

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[26]See J. H. M. Beattie, "Understanding in Social Anthropology", The British Journal of Sociology 10 (1959), pp. 45-60; see p. 55. Also see Dorothy Emmet, Function, Purpose and Powers (London, 1958), p. 23.

[27]Beattie, op cit., p. 49.

[28]Ibid., p. 49

[29]Idem.

understanding a society means being able to explain what really happens and why; in another sense, understanding consists in knowing what it would be like to think like a member of that culture. Beattie considers both indispensable for understanding in social anthropology and sees no difficulty with either kind of understanding.

An anthropologist, Clyde Kluckhohn, has also warned of the difficulties to be found in a universal anthropology. He writes:

> Most cultural menographs organize the data in terms of the categories of our own Western culture: economics, technology, social organization, and the like. Such an ordering, of course, tears many of the facts from their own actual contest and loads the analysis. The implicit assumption is that our categories are 'given' by nature — an assumption contradicted most emphatically by their very investigations of different cultures.[30]

But in spite of this comment, Kluckhohn rejects the idea that cultures are "disparate monads and, hence, strictly noncomparable entities."[31] For he admits that "there is a generalized framework that underlies the most apparent and striking facts of cultural relativity. All cultures constitute so many somewhat distinct answers to essentially the same questions posed by human biology and by the generalities of the human situation."[32] And concludes, "valid

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[30] Clyde Kluckhohn, "Universal Categories of Culture" in Readings in Cross-Cultural Methodology ed. Frank Moore (New Haven, 1961), p. 102.

[31] Ibid., p. 102.

[32] Idem.

cross-cultural comparisons could best proceed from the invarient points of reference supplied by the biological, psychological and socio-situational 'givens' of human life."[33]

From these illustrations, we see the attitude that while anthropology is seen to have problems in methodology, these problems are looked upon as the result of rash judgment and gratuitous assumptions on the part of the anthropologist. There are no difficulties in principle with the methods, especially when guidance is sought among the natural sciences. Throughout, it has been assumed by everyone considered in this anti-relativistic camp that the data of the natural sciences are the true 'givens' which are, assuredly, unaffected by cultural barriers and served as a stable point of departure for the comparative approach. A thoroughgoing materialism and empiricism is found beneath the ideas of Beattie, Kluckhohn, and others maintaining a science of culture. The question of the relevance of the natural sciences has not concerned the social anthropologist. Moreover, when difficulties were noted with the methods of a universal anthropology, these methods (comparative, functional, historical, etc.) were saved by a recourse to what the natural sciences had established.

A cross-cultural discipline as thus far outlined is decidedly uncritical in adopting (or projecting the presupposition of) the mentality of the natural sciences into the social studies. This is to neglect that science, as we know it, is a development in our culture. Perhaps modern science is the 'hallmark' of Western civilization and therefore necessarily uncritically accepted. The so

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[33] Ibid., p. 104.

called 'legitimacy' of the scientific mentality is reflected in these universalized anthropological values, values reflecting basic concepts of intelligibility in our culture.

Relativity theory and science.

The critical study of the antithesis of relativism has striking similarities to the relativist's claim. The mentality of modern science is seen as a basic prejudice. What then about the relativist's account of science?

Michael Polanyi is an advocate for the humanization of the physical sciences, just as Winch calls for the humanization of the social sciences. For Polanyi, the discipline and discourse of science is a form of fideism — a view that all knowledge ultimately rests upon premisses accepted by faith rather than reasoning or evidence. He rejects the doctrine attributed to Descartes that man's knowledge can only advance or develop legitimately if it does so by degree and if subject to the watchful eye of a methodic doubt. Rather, science is possible, he argues, because of what he considers the implicit faith the scientist has in scientific methodology. In an article Polanyi states that a belief is held 'implicitly' if it is held "by reliance on a particular conceptual framework by which all experience is interpreted."[34] This framework, a 'fiduciary framework', is then discussed:

> I hold that the propositions embodied in natural science are not derived by any definite rule from the data of experience, and that they can neither be verified nor falsified by experience according to any definite rule. Discovery, verification

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[34] Michael Polanyi, "The Stability of Beliefs", The British Journal for the Philosophy of Science 3 (1952), pp. 217-232, quote p. 217.

> and falsification proceed according to certain maxims which cannot be precisely formulated and still less proved or disproved, and the application which relies in every case on a personal judgment exercised (or accredited) by ourselves. These maxims and the art of interpreting them may be said to constitute the premisses of science, but I prefer to call them our scientific beliefs.[35]

Polanyi is interested in the stability of beliefs. He presents a description of what he terms "defense mechanisms of implicit beliefs" and goes on to argue that these same mechanisms are found both in the beliefs of the Azande in the power of poison-oracles and in the beliefs of scientists in their scientific procedures. A 'belief-system' has certain mechanisms which protect the system against doubts arising from the introduction of evidence or claims damaging to the system and which also prevent the germination of any alternative system on the basis of this evidence. This process is, in part, what is meant by 'rationalizing'.

Polanyi argues that it is just as fruitless to try to convince a tribesman that the judgments of poison-oracles are based on chemo-physiological causation as it is to convince chemists that the phlogiston theory of combustion is correct. Neither can be discredited outright; for how would one in a non-question-begging way go about doing that? Rather, a choice of hypotheses is made on the basis of certain chosen, desired ends. This is not to say that Polanyi

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[35] Ibid., p. 219.

denies that one could not have reasons for choosing science over magic,[36] only that these reasons relate to and grow out of the basic, underlying fiduciary framework of Western man. They are not reasons generated from an Archimedean assessment of both modes of life. We cannot break through what he called the 'logical limitations' of our scientific framework.[37] For no matter how exhaustively we study the Zande conceptual system, we will never see these beliefs as false or illusory without imposition of our own value structure onto the values of the Azande.

This theme is further developed by Polanyi in his book Personal Knowledge.[38] In this he elaborates on his notion of the premisses of science. He speaks of the 'commitment' to a certain framework of ideas. Polanyi writes:

> When we accept a certain set of pre-suppositions and use them as our interpretative framework, we may be said to dwell in them as we do in our body. Their uncritical acceptance for the time being consists in a process of assimilation by which we identify ourselves with them. They are not asserted and cannot be asserted, for assertion can be made only within a framework with which we have identified ourselves for the time being.[39]

Science, then, commits us to a certain 'vision of reality' whose legitimacy is beyond the reach of any "objective

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[36] Ibid., p. 230.

[37] Idem.

[38] Michael Polanyi, Personal Knowledge (Chicago: Harper Torchbook, 1958).

[39] Ibid., p. 60.

criteria of verifiability – or falsifiability, or testability, or what have you."[40] The Laplacean delusion of strictly objective knowledge, devoid of cultural values, is not only an ideal but an ideal to which the actual pursuits of science pays no head.[41] And were this ideal ever met, the content of science would be nothing. Polanyi then argues that "Beliefs and valuations have . . . functioned as joint premisses in the pursuit of scientific enquires."[42]

Polanyi states that the concept of belief came to be rejected by modern thinkers since Descartes as a source of knowledge, because of the authoritarian excesses of Scholasticism. 'Knowledge' and 'belief' were looked upon as opposite poles. It is Polanyi's intention to bring back what he takes to be 'true sense' of 'belief'. He writes:

> We must now recognize belief once more as a source of all knowledge. Tacit assent and intellectual passion, the sharing of an idiom and of a cultural heritage, affiliation to a like-minded community; such are the impulses which shape our vision of the nature of things on which we rely for our mastery of things. No intelligence, however critical or original, can operate outside the fiduciary framework.[43]

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[40] Ibid., p. 64.

[41] Ibid., p. 141.

[42] Ibid., p. 161.

[43] Ibid., p. 266.

Relativity theory and language.

The relativist argues that the organized body of beliefs and linguistic practices found in all discourse from science to religion, is not only necessarily presupposed in our experience of the world and expression of this, but that the background of language as such must also be seen to be characteristic of, as well as characterizing, our understanding. By making 'reality' reflective of language and not, as usually assumed, language mirroring reality, the relativists are placing man in the centre of the conditions of knowledge. As we normally think of ourselves living in the world, they suggest that the world also dwells in our being. I turn next to the conditions of this conceptual primacy of the relativist's theory, viz. in language.

In Language, Thought and Reality Benjamin Lee Whorf argues that the way the Hopi Indians see the world is quite different from the way Indo-European people see the world.[44] This difference is noticable because of the differing structures of language. The concepts of 'past', 'present', and 'future' are not to be found in the Hopi language. Neither is there a concept of 'time' as a flowing, ceaseless continuum in which all things partake. Whorf suggests that the Hopi could not understand as we do what it means to cross the international dateline, or what the notion of 'progress' could mean in our sense. These linguistic facts,

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[44] Benjamin Lee Whorf, Language, Thought and Reality ed. John Carroll (Cambridge, 1966).

based on Whorf's detailed fieldwork, and the apparent fact that the Hopi do not appear to be baffled by their world-view, leads Whorf to contend that the Hopi language and culture conceal a metaphysic very different from our own Newtonian spatio-temporal one.[45] Instead of a cosmology framed in terms of space and time, the Hopi perceive the world in terms of 'being' and 'becoming' — "manifested" and "manifesting" Whorf describes.[46] To the former belongs what we attribute to the 'past' and 'present', though these are not distinguished, and the latter belongs what we attribute to the mental and futural. This distinction corresponds to our objective and subjective realms, although for the Hopi both are equally 'real'. Their thinking and that of a "paleface" belong to a different "unit class of mentality." [47]

Besides drawing attention to different ways people view the world, Whorf warns of the difficulties of trying to reconstruct an alien Weltanschauung in our own terms. He writes: "The very natural tendency to use terms derived from traditional grammar, like verb, noun, adjective, passive voice, in describing language outside of Indo-European, is fraught with grave possibilities of misunderstanding."[48] Grammatical categories, Whorf tells us, grow out of distinctions made within a language or family of related languages. "Noun" is defined functionally as 'a word which does so-and-so.' But this does not mean that the category 'noun' is

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[45] Ibid., pp. 58 ff.
[46] Ibid., p. 59.
[47] Ibid., p. 80.
[48] Ibid,, p. 87.

going to be useful in understanding languages outside the Indo-European tradition. To a certain degree, being able to use a noun is tied in with a tradition that leans heavily on the concept of 'substance' as a way of looking upon reality.

To the extent that Whorf seeks to impress upon us both that other people's 'vision of reality' may be markedly different from our own and that there are difficulties in coming to understand one 'unit class of mentality' from the vantage point of another, he is a proponent of cultural relativity. However, in certain places, when Whorf is speaking generally about his work, he, like Polanyi, seems to imply that the picture of man constructed by natural historians, Darwinians, Freudians, is the 'true' picture of man. Whorf implies here that man has risen from the ape and has perfected the means of communicating complex thoughts in an economical manner.[49] Whorf praises Edward Sapir, by whom he had been greatly influenced, for seeking the connection between "language, culture, and psychology."[50] Here, then, Whorf is using 'animal' and 'psychology' as meta-categories which transcend all 'unit classes of mentality'. Are the differences between the Hopi and our own languages then as radical as he wants to maintain? Is Whorf suggesting the cross-cultural approach to anthropology or is he defending cultural relativism? Neither his position nor his theory are clear.

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[49] Ibid., p. 83.

[50] Ibid., p. 134.

Linguistic relativity criticism.

Lewis S. Feuer is critical of 'linguistic relativity' and, in particular, of Whorf's theory.[51] If Whorf claims that language is characteristic of an implicit metaphysics, how then is it possible for people with the same language to develop different metaphysics? Moreover, people with radically different languages could produce the same metaphysics, Feuer suggests. He then argues that differences in syntatic structure or differences in tenses between two languages do not necessarily indicate a difference in philosophic ideas. People who do not distinguish the past and present might merely be employing a technique known in playwriting as the 'dramatic present'. This does not mean that they see different worlds. Rather, distinctions between past, present and future are basic aspects to the human experience of time which is universal.

Feuer develops his position that there are universal categories and common human experiences by returning to the biological and essentially Aristotelian model. He writes:

> A common, universal, scientific mode of thinking manages to express itself in all languages. It is the linguistic aspects of the common struggle of men everywhere for survival in the midst of their environment. There is the impact on all languages of these categories and distinctions which facilitate the matter of fact causal reasoning without which we could not cope with their problem of biological existence.[52]

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[51] Lewis S. Feuer, "Sociological Aspects of the Relation Between Language and Philosophy", Philosophy of Science 20 (1953), see esp. pp. 86-88.

[52] Ibid., pp. 96-97.

Hence, there is nothing mysterious in the fact that the Eskimos have three different words for what we call 'snow', words which translate to 'packed snow', 'slushy snow', 'flying snow'. This only indicates that snow is of much an importance to the Eskimo, so much so that he builds his home out of it, that it becomes pragmatically necessary for him to make finer distinctions than would be necessary under other circumstances. In effect, then, Feuer is claiming that the principles of linguistic relativity is an ad hoc hypothesis superimposed to fit some facts of linguistic behaviour.

Feuer has raised the question of what kind of evidence the principle of linguistic relativity rests? Is it an empirical generalization or an a priori recommendation? However, in this debate of analysis we have also seen the question raised of what kind of evidence there is for the claim that there is a common human experience employing universal categories. Is this view based on a priori recommendations? If so, it would be impossible to prove and if applicable only so by imposition, not necessity. Or if this is an empirical thesis then it must be established.

Feuer's argument turns on the assumption that significant linguistic differences should, if Whorf is correct, correspond to differences in philosophic ideas. And he considers that he has proved his point when he notes that those American Indians who do not distinguish between day-before-yesterday and day-after-tomorrow have not developed a metaphysics in which the immediate past and immediate

future are identified.[53] But Whorf might argue that Feuer is assuming that the differences must be philosophical differences. This argument, in turn, presumes a certain conception of philosophy where man's reaction to the world he encounters takes the shape of a metaphysical doctrine about the nature of reality. Whorf, however, would want to hold that differences between 'unit classes of mentality' correspond more to the world-view out of which a certain philosophical position will develop, with the world-view prior to the philosophical ideas it nurtures. Philosophy would be an explicit re-construction and rationalization of that world-view and take on various forms, and not by definition correspond or underlie the world-view. Philosophy as it is known in the West would be just one of the possible products of man's world-view. Art and history, for instance, are other products. And if so, Feuer then begs the question with the idea of 'philosophy' he states.

Conceptual relativity and objectivity.

Central to the theory of conceptual relativity is the contextual relation of 'knower' and 'known'. This context I've called "conceptual", referring not only to concepts but to one's vision of the world, to the intelligibility and intelligible experience and encounter with the world. As such, this includes 'the world' as one feels one's self in the world: the personal (or subjective) and the public (or objective) aspects of the world. I'm referring to the 'form of life', the 'constellation of absolute presupposi-

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[53] Ibid., p. 88.

tions', the 'Weltanschauung', the 'unit class of mentality' and 'fiduciary framework'. The conceptual scheme is uniquely finite for the relativist. In contrast would be the necessity of a general framework thought to be found in all cultures, underlying universal conditions and common experiences for all people in all societies. Contrasted is a context-independent world or nature which the particularity of all cultures and the individuality of all people relate to.

As a consequence of the central notion of the contextual relation — the internal relation of the knower and the known, an epistemological presupposition of Winch's internal relation of concept and context autonomy — the conceptual relativist argues that each conceptual scheme provides the sense of the world. The conceptual scheme does not correspond to an independent world to give this sense but rather defines a relative and dependent characterization of the world. This is not, however, a sceptical claim. Indeed, the relativist wants to overcome the traditional dichotomy between belief and knowledge and make knowledge possible — albeit a finite and relative knowledge. The road to knowledge begins with the assumption of the implementation of some conceptual scheme. This primacy (and not 'given facts of nature') has ontological status. The conceptual world then is no illusionary world, not an approximation of some independently characterized world; but rather an 'objective world' bound to cultural and not natural phenomena. The relativist's world is in opposition to realism and naturalism, the assumptions of empiricism and materialism. The rela-

tivist's 'world' is meant to be a form of knowledge about the world as authentic as any knowledge can be.

Theoretical relativity.

Conceptual relativism is about the diversity and intelligibility of world-views. It is not, however, indicated in the content of this conceptual diversity; diversity is rather characterized as relativistic. I have shown how conceptual relativism can be set forth as both methodological recommendation and theoretical explanation for the problems and nature of understanding. As such, relativism is a philosophical position inneed of defence.

As stated in the introduction, my study and its arguments begin with the fact of conflicting and competing alternative frameworks. I am beginning with the fact of something people do. Anthropologists, sociologists, historians, philosophers, politicians and ordinary people frequently engage in the mutual criticism of frameworks. More than a recommendation is needed from the relativity thesis to convince us that such an activity is nonsensical or impossible. We need to know about the nature of that activity before the view of autonomy is acceptable.

We believe that there is communication between participants in different forms of life. And communication requires some shared medium. This medium exists before the relativist makes his claim; we cannot ignore this condition. If frameworks were really discrete and autonomous then there could be no conflict, no disagreement; indeed, no argument (valid or invalid) could be expressed. But if there is,

as it is our aim to show, a shared medium, some larger context to frameworks, then forms of life must in fact be partly related, and thus not truly discrete or autonomous. Radical pluralism entailing the multiplicity and critical isolation of the norms of rationality cannot be maintained; there cannot be truly discrete forms of life and thus notions of rationality cannot really be all that different and independent after all.[54] There must be room for criticism.

The problem with the Winchian autonomy thesis then is that it abstracts from the reality of historical dialogue an unrealistic picture of conceptual schemes; it neglects the area of conflict and criticism. For Winch, the idea and its context are only internally related, a relation whereby the idea would loose its meaning and thus loose the possibility of external framework criticism when separated from its context. But as I have emphasized, the dialogue of conflict, whether rationally justified or not, between conceptual frameworks does go on. What I am suggesting then is that the limitation of an internal relation of concept and context actually reaches beyond itself in the recognition of alternative conceptual frameworks. One

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[54] A similar argument is offered in an article by John Kekes, "Rationality and Coherence", Philosophical Studies 26 (1974), pp. 51-61. Here Winch's theory for a pluralism of norms of rationality is rejected as being inconsistent because it both requires that there be distinguishable forms of life and at the same time makes it impossible to distinguish them. Different criticisms on the same autonomy theme are offered by the following: Alasdar MacIntyre's "Is Understanding Religion Compatible with Believing?" pp. 62-77 and "The Idea of a Social Science" pp. 112-130 both in Rationality ed. Bryan Wilson (Basil Blackwell, 1974); Kai Nielsen's "Wittgensteinian Fideism", Philosophy 42 (1967), pp. 191-209; "Rationality and Relativism", Philosophy and the Social Sciences 4 (1974), pp. 313-331, and "The Coherence of Wittgeinstein's Fideism", Sophia 11 (1972), pp. 4-12.

should thus be more optimistic about understanding the dialogue of criticism than Winch would allow.

Writing about Winch and his Wittgensteinian influence, Karl-Otto Apel makes such an optimistic appeal for the appreciation of conflict in the historical and contemporary dialogue of conceptual schemes.

> Winch, however, due to his Wittgensteinian presupposition that the language games determine the limits of understanding and that any question can be asked meaningfully only within a specific language game, arrives at a kind of 'monadology' of different cultural systems.
> As finite human beings who cannot know sub specie aeternitatis the final result of history, one will have to accept with Wittgenstein the existence of different forms of life as different forms of understanding. But from this IT DOES NOT FOLLOW, in my opinion, THAT PHILOSOPHY SHOULD GIVE UP ALL ATTEMPTS TO CRITICALLY EVALUATE THE KNOWLEDGE ATTAINED IN VARIOUS FORMS OF UNDERSTANDING (e.g. in religion, or in myth, science and philosophy). Instead they all should be related to the common interest in knowledge of mankind, the latter participating in a concrete historical dialogue.[55]

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[55]Karl-Otto Apel, Analytic Philosophy of Language and the Geisteswissenschaften tran. Harald Holstelile (Dordrecht, Holland: Reidel Publishing Company, 1967), p. 54, emphasis is mine. Apel continues: "Winch's assumption of the language game, only understandable by and in itself, is really a mere theoretical abstraction, which is strictly applicable only in mathematics. . . . . One could therefore feel tempted to play off Wittgenstein, the critic of language and metaphysics, against Wittgenstein, the 'surveyer' of the language games (who leaves everything 'as it is'), by pointing out that most language games relevant for the history of the human mind, if perhaps not 'idling', so still need a supplementary interpretation — to be fully understandable — which goes beyond the internal relations of the concepts used and takes into account the actual behaviour of the language game participants as not consistent with the concepts used in

continued overleaf.

In sympathy with the above quote, I feel that a 'supplementary interpretation' is needed to fully appreciate the significance of concepts in their contexts. Beyond the Winchian internal relation we must also appreciate the comparative and critical area where concepts and conceptual frameworks can be evaluated.

Conflict is significant.

My thesis-argument begins with three assumptions: (1) that pluralism in both cultural and philosophical areas is already present, (2) that we have a motive or desire to make evaluations and choices among the various alternatives in this pluralism, and (3) that differences and conflict between alternatives are meaningful and therefore it is possible for us to have good reasons for our choices. My thesis-argument argues for the plausibility of the third assumption, and to show that critical choice among alternatives is possible without assuming either one absolute framework or affirming total relativism for all the views.

The first two assumptions are descriptions of historical fact. Assumption (3) is not. Wanting to choose among alternatives does not itself amount to a given ground for making choices. Wanting to choose and making the rational choice are not identical.

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55 continued from previous page.

that game for public interpretation of the behaviour. In other words: I would like to see the language game - as opposed to Winch's conception - as a dialectical unity of 'use of language', 'practical form of life' and 'understanding of the world', which means that these three 'moments' (as Hegel used the word) or aspects which constitute the language game do not always have to agree with each other, but rather can stand in a certain discrepancy towards each other and still make up one language game." Ibid., p. 56.

Perhaps the meaning of an argument is only apparent. How do we know we are not deceived in our critical dialogue? To answer this we must realize that there can be no a priori guarantee of valid communication, for indeed there are arguments which miss the point of the conflict, and there are 'conflicts' which may be resolved as not really being conflicts. (These possibilities as well as genuine arguments are illustrated in the next chapters). The answer to this question must be empirical, for it depends on particular arguments and conflict; we must consider the context and content of any conflict to determine whether it is genuine. I will next show that the very fact that an argument may be unfounded is a reason why it may be genuine.

In the last section above I argued that there must be something in common with alternatives when, from our own conceptual framework, we recognize pluralism. If the alternatives are neither incomprehensible nor simply false then to make sense of them there is already a common ground for comparison. Without this possibility, alternatives would not be intelligible. But the strict autonomy theorist rejects a priori this possibility; he argues distinct standards of rationality and total immunity to criticism. And yet the strict autonomy theory also asserts that the alternatives are legitimate conceptual schemes, and the theory encourages non-critical acceptance. The theory thus works on a premise which it strictly denies. This is why I argued in the last section that more attention should be paid to the dialogue of conflict and com-

parison between different frameworks. This is not to suggest, however, that there necessarily is perfect translation of any concept, or that some conflict may not really be an illusion, or that some arguments may be misplaced. But there is something in common, a general ground of intelligibility which allows alternatives to appear as alternatives, not simply incomprehensible. The very recognition of the alternative as such admits there is more to one's conceptual scheme than an internal relation of concept and its context. It is therefore possible for (some) conflict to be genuine; philosophy can take place.

I began the Introduction of this study by describing philosophy as dialogue, both in historical and contemporary senses. What was most apparent in this dialogue was neither the attainment of philosophical truth or the failure to find philosophical wisdom. Rather, I said that what was most certain is that philosophers have always disagreed. And as long as they disagree, I want to suggest, there will still be philosophy. We cannot disagree on the intelligibility of our disagreement without ceasing to philosophize; although we may misinterpret each other, recognizing a conflict is itself some form of intelligible agreement. Now we may not understand each other's point of view, or one may simply be false while the other's position true, or we may both be correct in our assertions about different matters. But any such unfounded argument, where conflict is only apparent and where arguments miss the point, actually predicates itself on the possibility of something in common, something comparable - if nothing other than being <u>an</u> al-

ternative view. What I am emphasizing here is only the possible legitimacy of the dialogue, and that conflict and comparison can be interpreted and evaluated, not rejected *a priori* as being unfounded. I have not argued that philosophy necessarily exists as dialogue or that criticism is essential for philosophical knowledge; a philosopher, it might be shown, could maintain a solipsistic position, an incommunicable position, but that is not at issue here.

With a survey of the various views on pluralism and relativity in the social sciences, I began this chapter by emphasizing the immediacy of the situation, and by suggesting the need to account for the ongoing practice of criticism. I was concerned with the dynamics of frameworks more than framework structure. I now turn to a more specific account of pluralism, namely pluralism in metaphysical systems. I begin by adopting Stephen Körner's rubric for the discussion of frameworks.

Chapter Two

METAPHYSICAL FRAMEWORKS

Conceptual schemes.

An opinion widely accepted by scientists, historians, anthropologists and philosophers is that meaning is a function of conceptual schemes. A scientific conceptual scheme provides a method and suggests the problem field as well as standards for acceptable solutions; a scientist thus limits, defines and directs research. The historian recognizes that history is written from a given point of view, be it Catholic, Protestant, Marxist or Liberal. Such ideologies, the basic ideas of the historian's conceptual scheme, provide a guide for the selection of relevant data and a theme for constructive interpretation. A similar need is satisfied by the anthropologist's conceptual scheme. Criteria for the selection, interpretation and explanation of behaviour is supplied; the anthropologist distinguishes and differentiates various cultures and societies by recognizing their respective conceptual schemes of religion, science, politics, etc.

Differing conceptual schemes account for the variety of 'world-views' or cultural metaphysics as well as providing the stage for the more practical work of philosophical analysis. For the philosopher we find this generic phrase "conceptual framework" to include: form of life; paradigm; way of thinking, acting, believing; set of basic assumptions or beliefs; a language game. The philosopher has used such terms for a priori knowledge, depth grammar,

logic and ontology. Kantian categories provide a framework, as do scientific theories. Frameworks can also give form to thinking and factual discourse; they can provide structures that help determine action and choice: sets of values, social and political patterns, role expectation, ideologies and so on. But in general we may say that a conceptual scheme is necessary for organizing the data of experience so that we can perceive, think and talk about the world in a meaningful way. Behind any religious, historical, moral, social, economic, mythical, or artistic experience there is a specific conceptual framework characterizing that experience. And such a background is needed before reflective understanding and knowledge is possible. A system or framework of concepts thus provides: (1) for the categorization of basic items (events, objects, values, or forces, i.e. the terminology of ontology) in the given field of experience, and thereby (2) the constitutive and individuating principles associated with this categorization of items, as well as (3) the rationale or logic underlying the connections and relationships of the language used to articulate an understanding of the given experience. Restated: the categorical framework provides the categories and necessary connections that define and are used to express (in language, thought, behaviour, etc.) an area of experience.[1]

We possess conceptual frameworks without ever consciously learning them. Whole lists of categories and

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[1] Stephen Körner, Categorial Frameworks (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1974). See p. 10.

principles can be disengaged from our talk and activity. We use them, but do not look at them. Philosophers have developed many methods of uncovering such principles. Socratic questioning leads the respondent to discover his own presupposed categories and values. Various hermeneutic techniques try to speak the shared unspoken meanings and values that structure our community with other people. Ordinary language analysis tries to show us what we "know" all the time when we talk. The study of human experience by eidetic analyses tries to arrive at statements about necessary connections of meaning in terms of general ideas or essences. Logical reconstructionist try to build models of our frameworks. Using such methods, we can come up with frameworks for mentalistic language, or religious language, or the presuppositions behind giving promises, or doing Newtonian science. I do not mean to deny the difference and incompatibilities among these various methods, or to prejudge questions about which ones are appropriate. Still, they do all agree in seeking necessary connections for various areas of experience or discourse. Such investigations can be carried out for their own sake, to clarify presuppositions. But the traditional aim of philosophy has been to link self-awareness with self-criticism. Thus we may seek our frameworks in order to question them, and relate them to one another. The critical reconstruction activity which results is the concern of this study, namely the motive, justification, and rationality of metaphysical systems — the highest form of conceptual frameworks.

Conceptual frameworks can be local or total, unreflective or self-conscious. This study will deal with self-conscious reconstruction of total or metaphysical frameworks.

Frameworks can be local or total, dealing with one area or with all of experience and discourse. This distinction may seem straight-forward, but it is difficult to apply. Most local frameworks do not include principles defining themselves as local, or relating themselves clearly to other areas. Often a local framework will tend toward a creeping totalization, as its categories and principles are extended to ever wider areas thus excluding other possible interpretations. We may find ourselves with several of these incipient totalities jostling within us. Since the seventeenth century the West has been trying to unify competing total claims from a materialistic science, a personalist common sense, and a teleological religion. This kind of situation can give rise to the desire for unity through a self-consciously constructed framework. This type of metaphysical framework is the topic of my study.

Sometimes we have more than the competing totalizations that result when local frameworks extend themselves. We may find that we have an articulated total view which relates various areas to each other. Considerable effort in our past cultural history may have formed this view, but we find ourselves possessing it almost as naturally as we have hands or feet. When they remain unreflected on, these total views have enormous influence. And yet circumstances can lead us to see that there are other possible views.

Whether we react with calm or with acute anxiety, the awareness brings on a self-reflective or critical questioning. The products of framework reconstruction may not differ in form from unreflective frameworks, but they stand in different contrasts and result from choice and self-criticism. Since they are conceptual, and so expressible in language, local and total frameworks can be shared. The presuppositions of Newtonian science, or of giving a promise, exist for us. Sharing these frameworks forms a community. A group of individuals whose local frameworks happen to coincide are not necessarily a community. That requires shared practices and life, so that rules and frameworks are possessed by "us", and not by "me and you and him and him".[2]

Total frameworks may be held by a community as a community, or be the possession of a single individual, e.g. Spinozism before the circulation of the Ethics. Yet even before it was made public, when the specific framework Spinoza developed belonged to him alone, his effort to better his understanding was a personal contribution to a shared dialogue and a shared cultural task. Thus the same local or total framework can exist in a number of ways: as individual belief, as shared by a number of individuals, or as shared by "us" and a basis for community. In any of these locations it may be consciously reflected on and reconstructed.

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[2] Charles Taylor, "Interpretation and the Science of Man", The Review of Metaphysics 25 (1972), pp. 3-51, See pp. 22-29.

We are dealing, then, with the self-conscious attempt to construct a total world-view. A unified vision of the whole of human experience can be achieved in many ways. Metaphor, analogy and the idea of a model are perhaps the most common, in science and philosophy. Often such ideas lie behind elaborate conceptual systems. In this study, however, I am concerned with the conceptual systems themselves, the synthesis that results from classifications, rules, and general principles. At their most wide-ranging, these conceptual systems form metaphysical theories and ontologies.

Conceptual frameworks contain certain types of principles.

To provide detail and some insight into the structure of metaphysical frameworks I will adopt a descriptive rubric developed by Stephen Körner in his book Categorial Frameworks.[3] Körner believes that metaphysics aims at the exhibition of implicitly accepted categorial frameworks, at their critical examination, and at their modification. The following general characterization of metaphysical principles is suggested: (i) Metaphysical principles are non-empirical; their acceptance or rejection does not depend on experiment or observation. (ii) They are not logically true in the sense of being substitution-instances of logical principles. (iii) They are comprehensive in the sense that they are applicable either to all entities or at least to the entities of one category or maximal kind.

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[3] Körner, op cit., p. 60 and passim.

And (iv) metaphysical principles are 'prior to experience' in the sense of somehow determining the structure of experience, rather than being determined by it.

Körner then suggests that a metaphysical framework can be viewed as a set of principles of the following types:

(I) Categorial Principles:

(a) acceptance or rejection of a classification of "objects" into particulars and attributes

(b) acceptance or rejection of a classification of particulars into independent and dependent, and the same for attributes

(c) listing of the highest genera in each of the four groups generated by (a) and (b)

(d) statement of the "constitutive principles" for each of the classifications

(e) statement of the "individuating principles" for each of the classifications

(f) statement of a notion of logical implication and its rules

(II) Transcategorial Principles:

statement of principles which are valid for any entity as such simply in terms of it being an entity and not in terms of it belonging to one of the highest genera.

(III) Metacategorial Principles:

statement of principles about the categorizations in (I) and (II). Such principles could give common features to all the highest genera, relate one classification to another, put limits on the other principles, etc.

In the following discussion, the term "framework" will be taken to refer to a set of principles which more or less fills this description. The principles which comprise a framework are part of first-order discourse about a given subject matter. Arguments about which principles to accept can be carried out as straightforward ontological, cosmological, epistemological arguments.

The descriptive rubric is only an expository device. It has both the advantages and the disadvantages of clarity. It loses something of the suggestiveness of the metaphor of a framework. I make no claim that all frameworks can be perfectly described in this way. Such a thesis is false. There are metaphysics which do not fit. For example, medieval analogy ontology does not fit because the multiple analogy between God, immaterial entities, material substances, and intentional entities make it difficult to produce a list of independent particulars and attributes, since "independence" is one of the characters possessed analogously, as is "unit" and even "being".

There are also systems of thought, such as Hegel's, designed in conscious opposition to this kind of classificatory thinking. Then, there are philosophical systems which are not "metaphysical" at all, such as Wittgenstein's. Comparison with this model can still furnish a useful starting point for discussion of such systems. Finally, this description fits most smoothly for classical and pre-Kantian metaphysical schemes. The welter of ontological-epistemological principles that make up nineteenth century German

systems are harder to describe in this way, although it seems that transcategorial principles are still at their heart. More recent systems are easier to deal with; for example, Bergmann, Whitehead, Sellars, and Strawson can be described rather well. Although the rubric is not perfect, it will suffice to expose the problem of pluralism.

While I do not claim that every framework must fit this description exactly, I do regard transcategorial principles as the essential ingredient of any metaphysical framework. By themselves, such principles provide only a general vision of the nature of reality. They have to be made applicable to various areas of experience and language. This is the function of categorial principles. It seems to me that other methods could be used, as in the medieval analogy theory or the Hegelian method. As long as a system of principles provides transcategorial principles together with some articulation which mediates them to different areas, it will be a "metaphysical framework" in the sense outlined above.

Categorial principles including ontological classifications.

The first two items under "categorial principles" (I, a and I, b) concern the division of "objects" into particulars and attributes, or a denial of that division, followed by a sub-division into independent and dependent particulars and attributes. Such principles are of the form "There are (are not) independent particulars", and "If something is an A it is an independent particular". Frameworks could differ

either as to which of these classes are non-empty, or as to what "objects" are to be assigned to what classes. For example, numbers may be conceived of as particulars or attributes. The class of independent particulars is more or less the class of substances in the Aristotelian sense, that is, entities whose existence is not <u>in</u> another entity. The class of dependent particulars corresponds roughly to the Aristotelian secondary substances. Independent attributes would be the basic attributes of independent particulars, while dependent attributes would be functions of independent attributes. Spatial location would be an independent attribute for Newton, a dependent attribute for Leibniz. On another application of the terms, the independent particulars would be Platonic ideas, while the things of this world would be dependent particulars. On a third use the only independent particulars would be Leibnizian monads; all other "particulars" would be well-founded phenomena and hence dependent. This brings up the important point that the relations between the items are not fixed. Exactly what constitutes an independent particular and how it is related to dependent particulars is a matter expressed by the framework itself. Such relations are expressed in metacategorial principles and can vary from framework to framework.

The third item under "categorial principles" (I,c) consists of a listing of the highest <u>genera</u> or maximal kinds of particulars and attributes. Such principles would have the form of "There exists G, H, J, K" and "If something is

an A then it is in genus G." Aristotle's categories represent one classic listing of highest genera. The recent discussions of "ontic commitment" leads to similar lists.

As an example of the application of the first three items (I, a, b, c) I will next consider what is thereby obtained by comparing the philosophical systems of Spinoza and Leibniz. Independent particulars for Leibniz are monads (God, and all the degrees of monads) and dependent particulars are well-founded phenomena (bodies, regions of space, etc.). In Spinoza's philosophy, independent particulars are represented by only one genus, one individual, namely substance or God; while dependent particulars are the modes of bodies and mind. For Leibniz, independent attributes are monadic perceptions (one genus, but varying continuously in clarity) while for Spinoza they are the infinite attributes of God. Dependent attributes for Leibniz are relations among monadic perceptions, also the properties of well-founded phenomena, especially spatio-temporal relations, casual relations, etc. Dependent attributes for Spinoza are the properties of finite modes (spatio-temporal properties, mental perceptions).

In addition, the relations of dependence differ. For Leibniz they are due to the free choice of God under the principles of sufficient reason and the best. The independent attributes (monadic perceptions) determine what monads will be chosen for existence in the world. They determine what the well-founded phenomena and their properties will be. For Spinoza independent attributes are decisive

in determining what dependent particulars and attributes will exist, but the independent attributes are those of God. These define possibility rather than being a selection from possibilities. Similarly there is a difference between Leibniz's "kind of emanation" linking God and the world and Spinoza's "indwelling and not transient efficient cause of all things."

Strictly speaking, God is the only independent particular for Leibniz. To express this fully we could use a three-tiered system of independent/dependent/very-dependent to classify God/monads/well-founded phenomena. Or we could class both other monads and well-founded phenomena as dependent, and make the difference clear by other principles. This flexibility points out that our scheme from Körner is a descriptive device and not a hidden core of all metaphysical systems. Precisely how it is applied depends on the purpose at hand. For example, my comparative classification brings out the parallel between individual monads and the Spinozistic substance. The three-tiered classification would bring out the overall resemblance between the roles God plays in both systems.

Constitutive and individuating principles, and a specific logic.

So far I have considered the classificatory aspects of a framework. These classiciations cannot stand alone. I have already pointed out that they are supplemented by metacategorial principles describing their inter-relations.

In addition, constitutive and individuating principles are needed to make sense of the classification. They also provide new areas where frameworks can diverge.

A constitutive principle (I,d) takes the form "There exists examples of attribute A, and if something is a member of genus G, then it is necessarily an A." These principles state logical consequences of an entity's belonging to a particular classification. "If X is a material object, then X has spatio-temporal location" (or, is impenetrable, or, is a congeries of monadic relationships, or, is independent of all other material objects, or, is related to all other material objects, etc.). A constitutive principle states the necessary conditions for an entity to be in a particular classification. It may state sufficient conditions as well, but that varies with the framework involved.

Constitutive principles are in the form of implications, and this makes them particularly important in philosophical argumentation. One of the most common type of philosophical disagreement comes about when thinkers agree on what entities fall into a given classification, but disagree on the constitutive principle involved. This disagreement may be expressed in a variety of ways. They may disagree on the correct analysis of material objects or on what material objects really are or on what it means to be a material object. In any case they are disagreeing on consequences that follow <u>a priori</u> from the fact that an entity is in a certain classification. On more abstract

levels this kind of disagreement can be very crucial and lead to large-scale misunderstanding. For example, "substance" has been thought of at times as constituted by independence (Aristotle, Spinoza), by a specific nature which expresses itself (Aristotle, Leibniz) or by being a passive substrate which has nothing to express (Locke). The fact that Descartes adheres to the first and second of these while Gassendi and Hobbes adhere to the third plays havoc with their discussion of the Meditations, as I will show later below.

Individuating principles (I, e) give the necessary conditions for something to be a distinct member of some highest genus. For example, "If something is a distinct material object, it has a unique spatio-temporal location." The current dispute about the conditions of personal identity involves similar principles. A frequent form of philosophical attack is to allege that a thinker cannot give individuating principles on a category, say that of abstract entities. Another illustration is Strawson's claim that individuating principles in non-ordinary frameworks must contain covert reference to ordinary modes of individuation if they are to work at all. Again, on the level of attributes, there was considerable argument among medieval Aristotelians whether reference to quantity was necessary to individuate species of material objects as well as individual objects. Although individuating principles state the necessary conditions for the application of a predicate to an object, Körner suggests that this idea can be developed to also give the sufficient con-

ditions by making explicit the demarcation of the maximal kind.[4]

The final item under "categorial principles" is the specification of a notion of logical entailment (I, f). This is needed because many framework principles are in the form of implications. In Categorial Frameworks, Körner devotes considerable space to showing that factual and practical thinking presuppose different logics, classical and intuitionist respectively. He also shows that any one logic can be regarded as fundamental and all others derived from it as reduced or expanded versions. The metaphysical frameworks we are considering fall within the sphere of Körner's factual thinking, but they too are affected by the availability of alternative logics.

There has always been an ambiguity about logic's relation to ontology. Is logic a neutral tool, or an expression of ontology? Is Aristotle's subject-predicate logic the organon he thinks it is, or does it stem from his metaphysics? From the time of the Rationalists, through the nineteenth century, up to the Tractatus, this ambiguity remains. Now that we have many logics to choose from, we must ask again whether logic is framework-dependent or neutral among frameworks.

There is a basic sense in which logic is independent and neutral. We have intuitions about what patterns of argument are valid and bring success in dealing with the world. These are given, independently of any formalization

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[4] Ibid., pp. 6-8.

or any framework. If someone denies them, and claims he has "a logic of his own" which allows him to admit round squares or deny the transitivity of entailment, we will reply that he is free to construct anything he likes and call it a logic, but we cannot see how he will be able to use the results for framework-purposes, or how he will be able to square his construction with evident facts.

On the other hand, there is a stronger sense of "logic" which blends with that of a "framework". We cannot avoid ontological issues when we formalize logic. Quantification theory demands choices between finitary and infinitary universes of discourse. Modal logic requires many ontological decisions. As we go along, our "logical intuitions" and "ontological intuitions" cannot be kept clearly distinct. In fact, metaphysical frameworks can be put into the form of logics plus assorted definitions. The various framework principles will appear partly as definitions and axioms, partly as formation rules, and partly as semantic rules. Putting frameworks into this form emphasizes one of their functions, their ability to act as a kind of canonical grammar. All these things blur the line between logic and frameworks.

It is tempting to regard the difference between the basic and the stronger senses of "logic" as matters of quantity. Thus, modus ponens and propositional logic are part of the common base, while the choice between S4 and S5 modality is framework-dependent. Unfortunately, there is no way to draw such a neat line. There is no abrupt change

in the kind of decisions we make when constructing a logic. Also, as Körner points out, even a law as basic as non-contradiction has different meanings, in the sense of different consequences, in different systems. For instance, it may or may not entail the law of excluded middle.

The ancient ambiguity about the relation of logic to ontology persists. We cannot get rid of it by assigning different portions of logic to the spheres of "given data" and "constructed interpretation." This may indeed be the same for frameworks themselves. In the end, this ambiguity is the same problem of pluralism and rationality that I am dealing with.

Transcategorial principles.

The principles I have been discussing (I, a-f) form the first major division of a metaphysical framework. Taken by themselves, these principles furnish explicit statements of "ontic commitments" or descriptions of "regional ontologies." They describe the basic objects of a realm of discourse. It is only with the addition of transcategorial principles that they become concerned with the highest genera of entities as such.

With "transcategorial principles" (II) we join a tradition leading straight from Aristotle: metaphysics is a science of being as such. The addition of transcategorial principles transforms a local framework into a metaphysics. These principles introduce the concept of "being as such" or "an entity as such". The highest genera dealt with in

the categorial principles thus becomes the fundamental kinds of entity. The transcategorial principles themselves concern every being, no matter what genus it belongs to. These principles are not summaries or generalizations: they do not merely express features common to all the genera. They deal with features of any entity as such, logically prior to the division into genera. For example, "If X is an entity, it is unified", or " . . . composed of act and potency", or " . . . knowable", or " . . . related to other entities". Included in such principles would be the topics discussed in the medieval treatises on the "transcendentals" (ens, unum, verum, bonum, aliquid, res) — predicates that transcend all genera and apply to all beings — "being" itself is not a genus. The principle of sufficient reason in its various forms is a transcategorial principle, as is the principle that no distinction between entities is allowable without separation of the distinguishing items, the principle that all entities are composed of simples, and the negations of these principles. Such principles influence whole classes of frameworks, and it is here that the most widely shared presuppositions of a given era can be found. And here, for example, the sudden shift away from absolute idealism at the beginning of this century seems due to a shift in transcategorial principles which makes certain approaches to the problem of the one and the many in terms of internal relations or organic wholes seem absurd. This kind of shift affects epistemology as well as ontology. It is only after the shift that various quick and easy refutations of idealism gain their currency. In the nineteenth

century, refuting absolute idealism tended to be a voluminous task.

Most transcategorial principles concern the problem of the one and the many. They have their impact on epistemological areas as well as in metaphysics proper. Both metaphysics and philosophic method are attempts to deal with the one and the many. There are many examples where the two run parallel: Aristotle's pluralistic ontology and pluralism of methods, Plotinus' formless One and ultimate silence in philosophy, Spinoza's monism of being and his mos geometricus, Bradley's logic and his ontology. One of the merits of the German Idealist tradition was that it recognized this interplay and tried to deal with it explicitly. Both the Critical Philosophy and Hegel's long discussions about how to begin philosophy attempt to avoid legislating method in terms of ontology, or vice versa. The wholesale adoption of a piecemeal approach to philosophy in early analytic thought effectively and deliberately excluded any ontology which did not accept the principle of simple location for entities and bits of knowledge. The breakdown of the epistemological side of the bias can be traced through Wittgenstein's various phases. Similarly, the methodological principle of "no distinction without separation" has been a central part of the defence of nominalism all through history.

Metacategorial principles.

"Metacategorial principles" (III) have as their object the other principles of a framework. They may give common features of various classifications. A common feature of the categorial principles of a categorial framework may be,

for example, that its constitutive attributes are non-perceptual or contain non-perceptual ingredients. Metacategorial principles may also relate one classification or principle to another. For example, that every member of the category of material objects 'participates' in a member of the category of Platonic Forms. And metacategorial principles may express limitations on the framework: that it accord with some religious revelation, or with ordinary language, or with science, that it sanction certain values, etc. Although metacategorial principles can state the relation between the principles and categories of the framework, they do not go further and give criteria for the adoption of specific principles. For if they did, the framework would become completely circular — legislating its own truth conditions — and therefore insulated from all criticism by comparison with data. Perhaps some transcendental and Hegelian frameworks do attempt this, but they fail to be completely insulated, since the adoption of the transcendental method itself lies outside the framework.

Because our descriptive rubric contains metacategorial principles, it has a wider extension than Kant's "dogmatic metaphysics" or a generalization from pre-Kantian systems. It can be said, for example, that Kant himself offers a framework which resembles a traditional metaphysics but differs in the meta- and transcategorial principles needed to express transcendental idealism. And I think that Kant would be content to be so classified. After all, he wrote the Metaphysics of Morals and the Metaphysics of Nature.

Using this description, we can group together Locke, the rationalists, Kant, the Neo-Kantians, and Wittgenstein in the Tractatus as offering frameworks, even though it would be untrue that they all offer traditional metaphysics. This allows a significant contrast with thinkers like the later Wittgenstein who offers neither a traditional metaphysics nor a framework.

As thus described, metaphysical frameworks can be seen at work in examples from the Leibniz - Clarke correspondence.

In order to show metaphysical frameworks in action, I would like to present several examples of how this description can illuminate philosophical disputes. These examples will also serve as short case studies in meta-physical pluralism. The first, which concerns disagreement on various issues between two frameworks, is drawn from the Leibniz-Clarke correspondence.

There are two striking areas of framework-difference between Leibniz and Clarke, the first in classification and the second in constitutive and transcategorial principles. Leibniz and Clarke can assign the same "object" to different categories. For instance they disagree on whether spatial relations are dependent or independent attributes. In Leibniz's view, space is a well-founded phenomenon, ultimately a relation dependent on the monadic perceptions and the principles of the best. For Clarke space is an independent attribute, a property of God, or more precisely, an eternal property caused by God's existence but not a property of God.

They also disagree on what categories there are to assign things to. From each one's perspective, the categories of the other becomes distorted and fragmented. Leibniz affirms a set of highest genera that would include monads, monadic perceptions, and well-founded phenomena, as well as the somewhat obscure divine causality and the possible substances. Clarke affirms a more traditional list of categories which seem to break down into substances (bodily and incorporeal), properties of substances (primary qualities and ideas), and relations between substances (geometrical and causal).[5]

An example of a disagreement arising from this difference of classification is Clarke's attack on Leibniz's doctrine of time. Clarke argues that time cannot be a relation because time has quantity while a relation has only order. Leibniz answers that since there is no vacuum in time or space, the ordering will be an ordering of just these items in just this order. The items will create the <u>extent</u> of time, which then can be measured if one wishes.[6] Clarke misunderstands this argument. He assumes Leibniz is saying that time contains order plus "the quantity of duration intervening between each of the particulars succeeding in that order". Clarke accuses Leibniz of contradicting himself.[7] But Leibniz had said there was no intervening duration at all, since there is no time independent of the items ordered. There is no empty vacuum in which the temporal order could be expanded and contracted in duration while keeping the

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[5] G. W. von Leibniz, <u>The Leibniz-Clarke Correspondence</u> ed. H. G. Alexander (England: Manchester University Press, 1976). See Clarke's fifth reply, sec. 36-48. pp. 103-104.

[6] <u>Ibid.</u> see Leibniz's fifth letter, sec. 105, pp.89-90.

[7] <u>Ibid.</u> see Clarke's fifth reply, sec.104-107, pp. 89-91.

order and items ordered the same. The "intervening duration" is simply other items in the order. When the density of the items ordered is taken into account, the order does "fill" the time and define the duration. Since their ontologies are different, Leibniz and Clarke never get the issue clearly before them.

One of the reasons it is so difficult for Leibniz and Clarke to communicate on this point is their disagreement on individuating principles. Clarke's particle substances are individuated by their spatio-temporal positions. Leibniz's monads are individuated by their complete individual concepts in the mind of God, that is, by their individual natures, which are summations of their perceptions. Since Clarke's substances can have external relations which individuate them, there is a possibility of identical indiscernibles. Further, there is a context in which the substances reside, a field of relations (space-time) which can be conceived of as empty. Thus it makes sense for Clarke to ask about the metric of the temporal order separated from the ordering itself. On the other hand, since Leibnizian substances are individuated by their internal properties, two absolutely similar substances would be identical. There is no context in which to make them discernibly different. Space-and-time is a function of the already determined individuality of the substances, so it cannot be used to individuate them. Neither can its metric properties be separated from the ordering they give it.

The other important framework difference I wish to point

out is one involving constitutive and transcategorial principles. Leibniz and Clarke agree on the transcategorial principle that every entity has as a sufficient reason a cause of some sort. They differ on what constitutes a cause and how an entity must be explained. For Leibniz one of the constitutive attributes of an existing entity is its position in a network of final causality regulated by the principle of the best. On the transcategorial level the principle of sufficient reason is interpreted in accord with final causality. For Clarke one of the constitutive principles of an existing entity is its being caused by God's power of efficient causality. The principle of sufficient reason is interpreted in this fashion by Clarke. Each philosopher admits both final and efficient causality, but each makes one of the causes dominant. For Leibniz, final causes have the constitutive role. Efficient causes are either relations of well-founded phenomena in nature, or the peculiar divine "emanation" that creates and conserves the world. These are both determined by the principle of sufficient reason and the best. What the efficient causes and their effects will be is due in the long run to final causes. For Clarke, efficient causes have the constitutive role. Final causes are allowed for in the notion that God designs the world and has a motive for what he does. But Clarke allows that God's motive could simply be the desire to do this rather than that because he wants to do this rather than that. Thus final causes have no independent determining power.

This difference comes to the fore in a number of ways. For example, it clouds the continuing discussion of whether or not it is to God's credit that he might correct the machine of the world from time to time. Both thinkers share the same motive here; they each want to magnify the dominion of God. Each wants God to be supreme and independent of the world, but they arrange this differently. For Leibniz God's dominion is in terms of wisdom-guided power, while for Clarke it is in terms of independent causal efficacy. As a result, tinkering with the machine of the world is for Clarke a sign of God's supreme dominion and something to be welcomed. For Leibniz such tinkering would be a continual reminder of the failure of God's wisdom and is to be denied.

Similarly, the long discussions about divine freedom can be summed up by saying that for Leibniz motives are final causes while for Clarke they are efficient causes. Thus Leibniz can feel that the principle of best preserves God's freedom while Clarke can accuse him of necessitating God's choice since the principle acts as a foreign force on God's decision. On the other hand, Leibniz can accuse Clarke of having an unmotivated divine choice which is no different from randomness. To Leibniz, Clarke's God who can decide even when there is no sufficient reason why something should go here rather than there is a random actor, in no way different from the Epicurean swerve of the atoms. To Clarke his God is not at all like the Lucretian atoms, since they simply swerved without any cause, while God causes him-

self to decide. That is precisely his motive and his freedom. Thus the framework differences bring shifts in the meaning of the principles on which Leibniz and Clarke claim to agree, such as the principle of sufficient reason and the importance of preserving God's dominion.

Finally, the correspondence gives us some evidence about the psychological effects of frameworks. For us today, the doctrine of monadic perceptions mirroring the universe is a difficult one. So too is Clarke's doctrine that absolute space is caused to exist not by some creative act of God, but by the sheer existence of God. The correspondents share our difficulties, but for each of them the difficult notions are those of the other man. Leibniz never feels at ease with Clarke's notion that God's every existence causes something, and he keeps trying to change it into some other view. Clarke, on the other hand, comments about monadic perceptions "all this I acknowledge I do not understand at all".[8] This raises the question how much of what we find unintelligible or inconceivable is due to <u>our</u> frameworks.

There is another side to the disagreement between Leibniz and Clarke. Our account makes it seem that while they thought they were arguing about space and time and God's freedom they were really only expounding different frameworks for dealing with these problems. This view tends to turn their discussion into two parallel monologues. Important as the analysis of framework presupposition is, we cannot forget that its context is a philosophical argument

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[8] <u>Ibid</u>., see Clarke's fifth reply, sec. 83-88, pp. 109-110.

in which the two men are trying to arrive at the truth about certain issues. Frameworks are not elaborated for their own sakes, but in the hope of arriving at the truth. Framework construction is not its own goal. If the argument between Leibniz and Clarke were truly a matter of parallel monologues, then there would be no problem of pluralism except retrospectively for the historian. Philosophers would merely spin out their systems in isolation.

Metaphysical frameworks and discussions of the mind-body problem.

I have just discussed an example of how differences between two frameworks affect a series of problems dealt with by Leibniz and Clarke. It will be of interest to see how differences of frameworks affect the same problem dealt with by a number of philosophers. The mind-body problem provides a good example here. I will first sketch out how varied the treatment of the issue may become, then examine a particular discussion in more detail.

As the problem is usually set up in textbooks, we are given two phenomena, the "mental" and the "physical", and asked to relate them. The two phenomena are roughly defined as the "me" of introspection and the "me" of science. A typical treatment of this sort can be found in Jerome Schaffer's Philosophy of Mind.[9]

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[9] Jerome Schaffer, Philosophy of Mind (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1968). Also see Chapter 4 in James Cornman and Keith Leher, Philosophical Problems and Arguments (Macmillian, 1968). The epistemological importance of the mind-body problem is recognized when Woody Allen in Getting Even (Indiana: Warner Books, Inc., 1971), p.28, writes: "In formulating any philosophy, the first consideration must always be: What can we know? That is, what can we be sure we know, or sure that we know we knew it, if indeed it is at all knowable. Or have we simply forgotten it and are too embarassed to say anything? Descartes hinted at the problem when he wrote, 'My mind can never know my body, although it has become quite friendly with

Schaffer introduces the problem of mind-body as follows:

> Let us confine ourselves to that form of consciousness which consists in having what I shall call mental events: those particular occasions which consist in the having of some thought, the feeling of some sensation, the imagining of some mental picture, the entertaining of some wish, etc. Our problem, then, will be to determine what it is that has the thought, feels the sensation, imagines the mental picture, entertains the wish, etc.
>
> The various theories concerning what has the mental events fall into three basic categories. (1) there is the view that they happen to purely nonmaterial things. . . . . (2) there is the view that they happen to purely material things. . . . (3) there is the view that they happen to things which are neither purely material nor purely nonmaterial.[10]

After considerable argument, Schaffer eliminates some of the alternatives.

> From what we have seen so far in this book, it is unlikely that we will be able to "reduce" the phenomena of consciousness to physical phenomena; that is, it is unlikely that we will be able to show either that consciousness is definable in terms of the physical or show that it is in fact identical with the physical. If that is the case, then we must face the problem of how the two phenomena are related, if they are related at all.[11]

Finally, he concludes for one of the alternatives:

> . . . must we remain completely on the fence with respect to epiphenomenalism or interactionism? There is one rather indirect consideration which

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[10]Schaffer, op. cit., see pp. 34-35.

[11]Ibid., p. 60.

> I think has some weight in tipping the scales toward epiphenomenalism. We have very good reason to believe that brain events themselves have causal effects . . . on mental events. . . On the other hand, we have no experimental evidence to show that mental events, by themselves, ever affect other mental events or brain events, and we have no reason to think that further developments will give us such evidence. . . And that means that perhaps it is more reasonable to accept epiphenomenalism than to believe in interactionism.[12]

This discussion shows many of the characteristics common to mind-body discussions. It starts with a basic dichotomy which is taken as evident and clear. It defines the alternatives in terms of the notion of matter and this in turn through reference to science. It eventually picks one of the classic alternatives (interaction, epiphenomenalism, idealism, materialism, double-aspect theory, parallelism, occasionalism, pre-established harmony). These alternatives are cleverly put forth in pictures in Richard Taylor's book Metaphysics.[13] The pictures bring out very clearly that the problem is conceived in terms of relating two given phenomena. Taylor's own discussion starts with the same question and argues to a materialist conclusion, using the following principle:

> From the fact that a certain state is in some respect unusual it does not follow that it is a state of an unusual thing, of a soul rather than a body, but rather that if it is a state of the body it is an unusual one, and if it is a state of the soul it is no less unusual.

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[12] Ibid., p. 75.

[13] Richard Taylor, Metaphysics (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1963), p. 13.

> Nothing is made clearer, more comprehensible, or less strange by postulating some new substance as the subject of certain states not familiar to the natural sciences. . . . . [14]

Such textbook presentations never touch the core of the problem. They work within a fixed cluster of alternatives which are determined by the way the problem is posed. We have to break down this restriction. There are not two given categories of "mind" and "matter". The data and experience which lead to this dichotomy can be treated in many ways. Even if we accept the dichotomy we can give the two categories many kinds of constitutive principles. In Leibniz, for example, the body is not of the same ontological status as the percipient monad; it is only a well-founded phenomenon. This, and the doctrine of harmony, change the alternatives offered in posing the question. There is a sense in which Leibniz is an interactionist, yet when the derived status of the body and causality is taken into account, he is a parallelist. But the parallel is not between two entities of the same level. The physical is a dependent particular.

There are other ways of putting the two categories on different levels.[15] In Sellars' version of the identity

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[14] Ibid., p. 29.

[15] For details on this see: Wilfred Sellars, Science, Perception and Reality (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963), esp. p. 31; and Wilfred Sellars, Science and Metaphysics: Variations on Kantian Themes (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1968); Richard Berstein, "Sellar's Vision of Man-In-The-Universe", parts I and II, 20 (1966), pp. 113-143 and pp. 290-316; and Michael J. Loux, "Recent Work on Ontology", American Philosophical Quarterly 9 (1972), pp. 119-138.

theory there is no single entity corresponding to either the usual "mental" or the usual "physical" sides of the standard dichotomy. There is rather a set of causal relations among a group of whatever the ultimate physical entities turn out to be. This corresponds to my mind and brain. There are also roles this aggregation plays in certain types of interactions with other similar aggregations. These roles form the basis of the "subjective" vocabulary of morals, and the ontological vocabulary of abstract entities. The "mental" content of my "mind" is handled by the ultimate neurophysiology, but not in terms of the concepts of today's science. The identity theory has grown into a complicated set of conceptual replacements depending on a different set of constitutive principles. For example, Sellars rejects the view that introspection can be taken as constitutive of the mental: there can be no incorrigible first-person report which establishes the "mental" as a sphere in its own right. This one move alone forces a new posing of the question.

The line between the "mental" and the "physical" can be drawn in different places. Husserl and other phenomenologists would include in the "mental" subject far less than the textbooks (or Descartes, for that matter). Many objects ordinarily classed as "mental content" become part of the "world" rather than of the subject. This is particularly true in the idealistic versions of phenomenology. In any case, given the theory of constitution, both the "mental" and the "physical" of the textbook presentation become dependent particulars.

The point of this review has been that the unitary phenomenon of man can be analysed in many ways. Even if we agree that relating the "mental" and the "physical" is the issue, differences in constitutive principles and categories can radically affect how we pose and answer the problem of understanding mind and body.

Metaphysical frameworks and Descartes' replies to objections.

As a final illustration of how frameworks illuminate philosophical disagreement, I will consider certain details of the mind-body problem in the discussion between Descartes and Hobbes. In his objections to the second Meditation, Hobbes asserts that

> . . . all Philosophers distinguish a subject from its faculties and activities, i.e. from its properties and essences; for the entity itself is one thing, its essence another. Hence it is possible for a thing that thinks to be the subject of the mind, reason, or understanding, and hence to be something corporeal; . . .[16]

To this Descartes replies:

> When I have said, this is the mind, the spirit, the intellect, or the reason, I understand by these names not merely faculties, but rather what is endowed with the faculty of thinking; . .[17]
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> . . . it is certain that no thought can exist apart from a thing that thinks; no activity, no accident can be without a substance in which

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[16] Rene Descartes, The Philosophical Works of Descartes tran. Elizabeth Haldane and G. R. T. Ross, vol II (Cambridge University Press, 1912), p. 61.

[17] Ibid., p. 62.

> to exist. Moreover, since we do not apprehend the substance itself immediately through itself, but by means only of the fact that it is the subject of certain activities, it is highly rational, and a requirement forced on us by custom, to give diverse names to those substances that we can recognize to be the subjects of clearly diverse activities or accidents, and afterwards to inquire whether those diverse names refer to one and the same or to diverse things.[18]

Descartes then goes on to argue that bodily attributes agree in posing extension while mental attributes agree in presupposing thought. These two fundamental attributes have nothing in common. Hence, given the guarantees on clear and distinct perceptions, they must belong to two completely diverse substances.

This disagreement can be expressed as follows. Descartes and Hobbes agree on the transcategorial principles that all entities must either be substances or inhere in substances. They disagree on what are the constitutive principles of a substance. They also disagree on the metacategorial issue whether clearly distinct concepts prove distinction of kinds of substance.

To take the last point first: Hobbes tries to weaken Descartes' argument from distinct concepts. He argues that ideas and images are not so far apart, so that perhaps the concepts of thought and sensation are not so distinct. In his final objection about the sleeping atheist, Hobbes questions the kind of certitude Descartes seeks. In

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[18] Ibid., p. 64.

Gassendi's objections, this point is pressed more directly when Gassendi refuses to believe that Decartes' "doubts" are meant seriously. Gassendi claims there is no higher certitude to be sought, and no lack of it to occasion doubt. This is a disagreement over metacategorial principles concerning the certitude of categorial principles and the evidence they demand. Descartes demands more evidence and different sorts of evidence from that demanded by Gassendi or Hobbes.

Even accepting Descartes' conclusion that the concepts of thought and extension are clearly distinct, Hobbes argues that this has no bearing on the dualism of body and soul. This is because he has a different conception of substance. Hobbes defines substance as "a material, subject to accidents and changes". This is a Lockean view of substance: the constitutive principles of substance is its ability to be a substratum. What it is a substratum for depends on the accidents. It is neutral, otherwise it could not be a substratum. In contrast, the passage cited above reveals that Descartes holds to an Aristotelian view of substance. The constitutive principle of a substance is its being an individual instance of some nature. This nature expresses itself in accidents and activities; it is discoverable from them. Clearly distinct activities argue to clearly distinct natures and so to different kinds of substance. For Hobbes, however, clearly distinct activities argue only to themselves. Substance remains a neutral substrate. Thought and body can share a common sub-

stance, with the difference in kind of accidents accounted for, if necessary, by making the predicates of the body qualities of the substance and the mental predicates its actions, as Hobbes explains in his example of leaping and the leaper.

None of the thinkers sees clearly how they differ. Hobbes and Gassendi use language which is for them technical and framework-laden. "Matter" and "subject" have meanings which are not those of ordinary usage. Descartes does not see this, and accuses them of not departing far enough from ordinary language. Descartes writes:

> I admit also quite gladly that, in order to designate that thing or substance, which I wished to strip of everything that did not belong to it, I employed the most highly abstract terms I could; just as, on the contrary this Philosopher [Hobbes] uses terms that are as concrete as possible, e.g. subject, matter, body, to signify that which thinks, fearing to let it be sundered from the body.[19]

On the other side, Gassendi accuses Descartes of coming up with nothing new or informative in this characterization of the self as a thinking-thing. Everyone knew that all along. He does not see that for Descartes "thinking" and "thing" (or substance) are involved as framework terms (in categorial principles). They are no longer simply descriptive.

It is revealing that both Descartes and Hobbes do not question the principle that the self is to be classed

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[19] Ibid., p. 63.

as a substance. Despite all their differences, it is the similarities between them which show up when we look at both from the point of view of certain later frameworks. Both earlier philosphers still use the notion of a "thing" with a "nature" and "activities" as a transcategorial characterization of an entity. It is just this that the nineteenth century philosophers attempt to eliminate in favour of the pure activity of the self-reflection constitution of the Spirit. Such a construction of a new highest genus and new transcategorial principles makes the older views seem more brothers than enemies. They are seen to share a deep presupposition to which there are alternatives. Attaining such insight is one sense in which philosophy can be said to advance.

In the last pages I have been trying to illustrate framework differences. After these examples it should be clearer how we are presented with a multiplicity of frameworks when we begin to think about a problem such as the mind-body issue. Various frameworks give us different ways of stating the problem. Even within a cluster of frameworks with broad agreement on some principles, there are still many possibilities.[20]

Metaphysical frameworks relate to data which is presented to them.

I have pointed out that we possess many local frameworks which do not always have clear-cut limits and relations with

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[20] On the issue of metaphysical pluralism, W. Allen, op cit., p. 29, does not summarize my discussion when he writes: "We can say that the universe consists of a substance, and this substance we will call "atoms", or else we will call it "monads". Democritus called it atoms. Leibniz called it monads. Fortunately, the two men never met, or there would have been a very dull argument."

each other. They can all jostle for priority. We find ourselves with conflicting beliefs about how to relate them. Besides our local frameworks we may have a more or less articulated total view created by the adjustment of our local frameworks or handed to us by our culture and history. By various routes, we can come to want a total view or to see our present one as located among various possibilities. We thus arrive at the task of self-consciously reconstructing a total framework.

I have taken a closer look at what principles such self-conscious frameworks contain, especially transcategorial principles, valid for any entity as such. These provide vocabulary and rules which go beyond any local principles. The other parts of a framework mediate and articulate this unity.

Frameworks are not free imaginative constructions. They are not empty rules for games no one plays; they are meant to apply to our world. Let us call whatever things a framework orders and interrelates its "data". By their nature, metaphysical frameworks have an unlimited field of data. They must relate to literally everything: to facts about the world, ordinary language, religion, science, art, thoughts, emotions, objects, experiences, actions, as well as to philosophical results like explicit local frameworks, distinctions, rules, presuppositions, necessary connections. We cannot ignore such data, or wish them away. Accounting for data is what frameworks are for. The data provide criteria and form the common base which allows conflicting frameworks to conflict.

A difficulty arises at this point. Metaphysical frameworks give us principles for speaking about all entities. Any attempt to assemble data will involve language about entities. We will want to speak about thoughts, actions, electrons, angles . . . as entities. But there seems to be no neutral language; however we talk, we will be using some framework. Hence, if frameworks legislate what are allowable entities, each framework will become the master of its own closed circle. All data within the circle will support the framework because no other was allowed to enter. Frameworks will absorb their data. This threatens us with all the problems raised by Paul Feyerabend concerning scientific theories: There is no neutral observation language; no terms have the same meaning in conflicting theories; each theory has its own objects, world, and confirmatory experiences; so choices between them become arbitrary or matters of taste.[21] This objection forces us to be more precise about what is and is not neutral among frameworks, and what powers frameworks have over their data.

We must distinguish between a datum referred to as it is, and a datum presented as a datum. The colour of the ink on this page is a potential datum for the study of human vision. But it does not become presented to us as a datum until we ask questions such as "Why isn't the ink a pale yellow?" Data give information about which of several possible alternatives has actually been realized.

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[21] Paul Feyerabend, "Consolations For the Specialist" in Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge ed. Imre Lakatos and Alan Musgrave (Cambridge University Press, 1977), pp. 197-230.

("Which is the most powerful underground movement in Brazil?" "We have no data on that".) The colour of the ink on the page can tell us which of many ranges of frequencies the human eye actually distinguishes. When we speak of "data for a framework" we must make the same distinction. Thoughts, Einstein's formulae, angels, and the distinction between "ought" and "is" are all data for metaphysics, but merely referring to them does not present them as data.

Frameworks deal with kinds of entity. Their principles give rules relating various kinds of discourse. The individual emotion, angel, or material object is significant because it reveals something about its general type. (The notion of an "individual" is a striking example: we are interested in irreduciable individuality as a general type of entity). Thus framework data involve types of entity and whole levels of discourse.

The first requirement for turning potential into actual data is seeing some kind of entity or discourse <u>as a whole</u>. We need a perspective on material objects, or angels, that tells us what is significant about them. Putting this in the formal mode: we need rules for material object talk which let us see it as a set of sentences generated by a finite set of categories and procedures. When we find a local framework for material object talk we are able to see it as a distinct whole with significant features.

The second requirement is seeing our potential data <u>as a limited whole.</u> It is one thing to discover the framework of material object talk. It is quite another to claim that

material object principles provide a total framework for all entities. I spoke earlier of the colour of ink becoming a datum when we asked the right questions. If we want to turn local principles into data for metaphysics, we ask "Are these the categories and principles for any entity as such, or only for a local area?" "Do these rules include strict transcategorial principles or not?" Asking these questions involves entertaining the possibility that the principles for "being" will be wider than those under consideration. This means that the local principles are conceived of as local, as part of a larger whole.

The third requirement for presenting framework data as data involves seeing the limited areas as related to other areas. Even if we agree on the analysis of mentalistic talk, we may differ over how to relate it to scientific talk about brains. Presenting mentalistic talk as data involves admitting the possibility that its relation to other areas might be different than some view suggests. And to do this we must be able to talk about the rules and principles of local areas in a language rich enough to discuss different possible total orderings.

Metaphysical frameworks as used to reinterpret as well as relate data.

The last pages concerned how data became relevant to frameworks; I now turn to the influence frameworks have over their data.

We can move from concrete talk about intending to go

to the store, through analyses of intending and actions, to relating the common sense local framework to that of science by means of some overall metaphysics. What is crucial is that we have no rigid rules about how to do this. There are few clear-cut areas of discourse which distinguish themselves from others. To see an area of experience or language as a limited whole, we must make judgments about its extent, its rules and necessary connections, about what is important and what is not, what is form and what is matter. For instance, is the existence of a "mind" part of the matter reported on in mentalistic discourse, or only a form for reporting on behaviour? There are no rules for settling this. Philosophers have developed various methods, but there are no rules about which method to use and where to apply it.

This forces us to ask whether there are unique local frameworks for each area, or whether different methods might come up with different results. The answer varies. Even without discussing the efficacy of various rival methods, we can see certain problems. Well-defined activities like Newtonian science or giving promises can have clearly statable rules and principles behind them. Most of our talk cannot be so neatly described; we have to delimit the areas before we can study them. It is not surprising that results differ.

With areas like religion or philosophy we have a different problem. Although we may be able to distinguish religious practice, our analyses give us not local frameworks but agents' self-interpretations in terms of shared meanings

and goals. We get no ontology from "religion" (although a given way of being religious may involve holding a certain ontology).

Thus we have a curious situation. The data remain. People go on being religious, weighing oranges, giving promises. The world goes on its way. Our framework analyses do not hide or remove the data. Yet we have no straightforward access to it as data. When we organize and analyze it for philosophical purposes, we make judgments and selections that follow no fixed rules. Similarly, while we can bring data to bear for or against a framework, we cannot neatly separate a framework into data plus interpretation.

We have similar problems when we interrelate various areas. There are no evident rules about how to relate science and common sense. We do have feelings and judgments about what is natural and important. We may well have unreflective total views at work. At times the various levels themselves will contain directions on how to relate them, but these often conflict. We are heir to the results of historical dialogue on these matters, a dialogue that both helps and confuses. There are so many possible priorities.

In spite of this lack of rules, we cannot be merely arbitrary. I have no right to produce an analysis of religious language that does violence to the internal criteria of the area. I may suggest new internal criteria, but they will be judged by the action of religious people; I have no legislative power. Religious language is what it is

independent of my analyses. Even if my analyses enter into the self-understanding of religious people and change religious practice, a new analysis will be necessary. The second analysis will be again distinct from its object. The data are just there; I cannot revise their internal structure.

And yet this still leaves us quite flexible. Though I cannot arbitrarily revise the internal structure of religious language, I can relate or reduce or translate religious language as a whole into some language I think more fundamental. For example, I might reinterpret religious language in the terms of some psychological or sociological theory. In a similar fashion, the materialist will find a way of translating talk about minds into some scientific language which does without the entities he denies. These moves give us the possibility of criticizing the objects of a given area of language in a manner resembling the Marxist critique of classical political economy for reifying as "things" or "forces" what are properly described as relations or as the results of complex economic and social interactions. It is true that the metaphysician has the obligation to deal with the objects of all the areas of language, but one way he can deal with them is to offer a set of translation rules which show that a particular area's objects are to be understsood as functions of the objects of another area. Even the rare optimum case of a clearly defined and agreed on local framework does not settle the question which languages are fundamental.

In this process of investigating data and building frameworks, no datum is privileged. I cannot wish any datum away, nor can I take any analysis or datum as definitive of the total view. However I react to the data, I can always go too far. My translation of religious language or my treatment of material objects may be just too much. Or I may push my enthusiasm for science too far. There are no rules here, either, but when we sense someone has gone too far, we seek to prove it by finding reason in the data. The best philosophers are gifted with the sensitivity to feel such violations and the ability to show where the transgression occurs.

These are all matters of judgment in both of Kant's senses. We seek the appropriate general categories for the data, and we also seek in the data details that prove or disprove suggested general principles.[22] If we forget that framework reconstruction is a historical process that requires judgment, we will have trouble understanding the relation of frameworks to data. It is easy to imagine an atemporal confrontation between data and frameworks, or an atemporal legislation of data by frameworks. Neither of these pictures is true, because the process is temporal, sequential, and reflective. It involves judgment and mutual interactions. We begin philosophizing with unreflective frameworks of varying complexity. We work step by step at clarifying the data and constructing the frameworks. Neither is sacred; interpretation is, in part, creation. Aristotle might reinterpret a student's research report in

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[22] Immanuel Kant, Kant's Critique of Judgment tran. J. H. Bernard (London: Macmillian and Co., Ltd., 1931), see Introduction, part IV, pp. 17-20.

oysters to accord with his doctrine of the four causes. Here he uses framework principles as rules. Or, after long reflection on mathematics, he might decide that Plato was right after all, and revise his principles about secondary substances. Here, framework principles seem like generalizations. This double aspect, this vacillating authority, may seem strange but it is actually quite common. Most of our practical rules are like this. They are not generalizations to be upset by the first discrepancy, but neither are they absolute rules which will be enforced at all costs. Again, it is a matter of judgment, and there are not fixed rules.

Frameworks are 'ultimate' in several senses of the word.

With the relation of frameworks and their data in mind we can go on to discuss in what sense metaphysical frameworks are ultimate. There are at least four ways in which they are ultimate. The weakest is simply that they are the most general categories we can use. With frameworks we are dealing with "entity as such" and with highest genera of being.

The second and stronger sense arises because frameworks are more than generalizations. Within limits they have the power to reinterpret their data. We have seen the complex relations frameworks bear to their data, with considerable room for judgment and varying options. Much recent discussion in philosophy of science centres on the degree to which large scale scientific theories have a

similar relation to their data. What distinguishes metaphysical frameworks is that they have this freedom with their data combined with extreme generality.

The third sense of ultimacy follows from the first two. Metaphysical frameworks are our most general rules for conceptual thinking. There is no Super-Framework in which they are embedded. They are not reinterpreted in accord with still higher rules. It is this feature which makes pluralism such a problem. Framework reconstruction is not an arbitrary activity but yet it does not proceed by following anything like a larger-scale framework. Whatever criteria there are, they do not relate to frameworks in the same manner as these relate to their data.

The fourth and most important sense of ultimacy follows from the third. Because of its contents a metaphysical framework cannot be conditioned by a larger conceptual framework. If this is true, then it is impossible to discuss the plurality of frameworks and disputes between them without taking sides in these disputes. These frameworks are ultimate because there is no possible neutral conceptual meta-standpoint on framework disputes. And this statement must be clearly understood. From the standpoint of science it would be possible to do a psychology or biology of each dispute without committing ourselves to one side or the other. If we are only talking about the occurrence of the disputes, or about their content as a fact to be explained, then we can talk neutrally. But as soon as we deal with the content as content there is no

neutrality possible. That is, any description of a framework dispute which moves away from a verbal report and tries to categorize or describe the dispute in philosophically useful terms may soon introduce descriptive predicates which will not be acceptable to both parties. Neutral verbal reports are achieved by mentioning, not using, the term of the dispute. Any attempt to use the terms or arbitrate between the parties from a neutral point of viewwill have its neutrality open to attack.

It is this feature above all others which distinguishes the types of frameworks we are considering from those discussed in the philosophy of science. While a scientific theory can reformulate its data to some extent, it is not ultimate in regard to conceptual thinking: a neutral description of scientific disputes seems possible, because scientific theories can be embedded in more general or more formal conceptual structures which are neutral between rival scientific theories. In cases of framework dispute such as we are considering, there may not even be concensus on what the elements under dispute are. George may feel that his ontology includes Edward's, whereas Edward finds certain of George's assertions impossible, false, or just unintelligible, so he denies the possibility of the inclusion. Because a metaphysical framework sets conditions of reality and possibility, it also gives a specific viewpoint on the multiplicity of other "possible" frameworks. It excludes some frameworks from serious consideration, brands others as unintelligible, explains the errors of others,

and relates itself in a friendly way to still others. It is not that frameworks disagree on the ordering they give to members of the plurality; they can also disagree on which members there are.

Similarly there can be no successful attempt to attain a neutral standpoint and resolve the issue in a non-trivial dispute from a neutral vantage point. This follows from the inability to get a neutral description of the dispute and the questionable status of any supposedly neutral principles. I am arguing that there is no non-trivial neutral meta-philosophy which does more than report. Attempts to achieve neutrality and still do philosophy tend to shatter into two parts. One attains neutrality by staying reportorial; the other resolves the issues. The "linguistic turn"[23] can achieve neutrality only by becoming a descriptive science, a linguistics of philosophical disputes. Reporting the dispute solves no issues and cannot even decide whether the issues are resolvable. To take a stand, we must introduce principles beyond pure reportage. Such principles will not be framework-neutral nor supported from somewhere out of the reach of framework-interpretation. They thus cannot be both unquestionable, agreed on by all frameworks, and still able to resolve any issues.

Furthermore, the very attempt to isolate a neutral standpoint from which to discuss frameworks depends on prior judgments that such a detached standpoint is possible and that it must be used to resolve framework disputes.

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[23] Richard Rorty, "Metaphysical Difficulties in Linguistic Philosophy" in The Linguistic Turn ed. Richard Rorty (University of Chicago Press, 1970), pp. 1-39.

This involves denying quite a few principles, whether rationalist or empiricist, concerning the nature of intelligibility. The method which is supposed to achieve neutral arbitration actually has hidden allegiances within the various frameworks. There would be no problem except that the method pretends to be impartial. The number of candidates for the position of neutral meta-standpoint indicates there is something amiss with this quest. Otherwise we are forced into an ascending hierarchy of quests, but what neutral method decides among rival candidates for the role of neutral method of deciding? It is true that some frameworks have among their metacategorial principles the claim to have achieved a neutral point of view. To the extent that they make such a claim, this study disagrees with them. Thus our very discussion exemplifies our conclusion that there is no neutral standpoint: we are describing framework disputes, and we find the terms of our description themselves work for some frameworks and against others, at least on metacategorial issues, and perhaps on others as well. The possible circle involved in this process will be discussed later. For now I need only note the consequence of making the point support its content.

There are, then, at least four senses in which metaphysical frameworks are ultimate. (1) They are the most general conceptual structure we have. (2) They can reformulate their data. (3) They are not embedded in any higher conceptual structure of rules. And (4) there is no possible neutral conceptual meta-standpoint on their disputes. The last two senses are what complicate the problem of pluralism.

And yet metaphysical frameworks do exist within a larger context.

The problem of pluralism can be reconciled. To say that frameworks are ultimate in the above four senses is not to say that they exist in no larger context. True, they exist in no larger conceptual context of rules. Still, framework reconstruction remains something we do. It exists in a context of practice, activity, and purposes. Our very awareness of the plurality of frameworks shows that frameworks do not encompass us absolutely. They may be about everything, but they are not everything.

While they remain the ultimate structuring of our conceptual systems, frameworks can be reflected on in a variety of ways. They contain self-reflective metacategorial principles. They can be described, although there are difficulties with the idea of a neutral description. We can have a psychology, a sociology, a biology of framework-thoughts. This is not to say that framework disputes can be resolved sociologically. Still, holding frameworks is an activity with causes and conditions. "To be an ultimate structure" does not equal "to have no context". What will concern us later will be the teleological and purposive context of frameworks more than their scientific and causal conditions.

Another important qualification on the ultimacy of metaphysical frameworks is that there are other ultimate structures in other spheres. Metaphysics is our ultimate conceptual structures, but there are other mental activities besides conceptualization. We can have large scale moral and value structures, ultimate mythic or religious symbol systems, highest scientific theories, and perhaps something

like ultimate political or practical judgments on means-ends. These various ultimate structures are linked because each can serve as data for the other.

The important point for my purposes here is the difference between self-reflection within such ultimate structures, and the relation by which one ultimate structure is used as data for another. For example, when in the biological sciences the theory of evolution is proposed it may be criticized (not on scientific but) on religious grounds. It is a religious judgment, then, about the religious neutrality or the religiously critical status of this scientific theory. Although it is one thing to achieve a religious self-understanding and symbolization of religious practice, and another thing to do philosophy of religion, these areas of discourse and meta-discourse do relate; they are not autonomous. Another example is seen when a behaviourist psychology interprets religion, and experimental methods in behaviourist psychology are criticized from a moral base. If in the former we reinterpret the arguments and judgments of the latter, we get into a meta-scientific position. But even here, as before, we have partly scientific, partly moral views. These relations can exfoliate endlessly. Here, however, I am not concerned with other ultimate structures but with the general context of activity supporting them and metaphysical framework reconstruction. If the problem of pluralism is less urgent in science than in metaphysics, it is more urgent in ethics and in religion. It is most urgent when we

consider cultural and institutional frameworks. Although the answer to pluralism need not be the same in all areas, discussion of one area may indeed shed light on the others. That, at least, would be a benefit of this study.

Chapter Three

LIMITS AND LEGITIMACY OF FRAMEWORKS

The relation between framework principles and ordinary language is not simply logical.

Consider a simple declarative proposition. If I say to you, "George is an old-fashioned Catholic," I give you both information and rules. I enable you to place George in some classification of religious practices. He is an old-fashioned Catholic and not old-fashioned Baptist or Jew. Depending on the depth of your knowledge you can infer other facts about George. He probably goes to Mass every Sunday, says the rosary, would defend such and such beliefs and attack such and such others. You might even make guesses about his probable ethnic background and political views. You are able to draw these inferences because I have placed George in a category which has connections with various propositions and activities. Much of what you know about George could be put in the form of hypothetical statements. "If I observe George on Sunday he will be seen going to church". "If I argue with George about papal infallibility he will take an affirmative position and may get angry". In this sense the information I gave you provides rules for how to deal with George and what to expect when you do. It gives you some of George's contours, and you can use this knowledge to fit in with the shape of his life as you might learn your way around a house you visit.

The meanings of both "George" and "old-fashioned Catholic" depend on what they contrast with. I am speaking

of George, not of Tom or Harry. He is an old-fashioned Catholic, not a Muslim. These contrasts depend in turn on further information. Muslims are an uncommon sect; without background we would learn little from a contrast between old-fashioned Catholic and Muslim.

Besides such background, the very activity of classifying George's religion presupposes that George is observable, that it is the same George who goes to church each Sunday, that George is honest in avowing his beliefs, that the content of "old-fashioned Catholic" and similar predicates does not change from day to day. These are the sort of presuppositions that Wittgenstein is fond of pointing out.

How are framework principles related to "George is an old-fashioned Catholic", its associated background, and presuppositions like "George is the same from Sunday to Sunday"? Do framework principles occur among the logical consequences of "George is an old-fashioned Catholic"? We might think that the proposition implies "George is the same from Sunday to Sunday" which then implies "George is a substance". But this will not work. Consider the principle linking "substance" to "endurance through time". In its most general form ("If anything is a substance, it can endure through time"), the principle cannot be inferred from "George is the same from Sunday to Sunday", for this would be an illicit move from particular to universal. In its particular form ("If George is a substance, he can endure through time"), the principle can be inferred only

by the addition of its general form. Similar arguments will show that no other framework principles can be consequences of ordinary propositions.

Are framework principles then premisses for ordinary propositions? From the principles "If anything is a substance, it can endure through time" I can derive "If George is a substance, he can endure through time". Given "George is a substance" I can then conclude "George can endure through time". But unless I want to claim that all substances necessarily endure, which causes other difficulties when applied to George, I cannot move from "George can endure through time" to "George is the same from day to day". The framework principles are not sufficient; we must add premisses to prove that George is actually the same each day. These premisses will rely on ordinary criteria of sameness: "I saw George each day last month and he looked the same to me" or "The man in question attends church each week with George's wife" or "I spoke to George and he remembered coming last week". Together with the framework principles, these do allow us to infer "George is the same from day to day". But, without any framework principles at all, they still allow us to infer George's sameness. Framework principles are not necessary to obtain the ordinary propositions. Since they are neither necessary nor sufficient, they do not function as premisses.

I might try to avoid this conclusion by saying that the substances in question are particles which do not necessarily endure. I can then use my framework principles

as premisses for concluding that various particles are in fact the same from day to day. But I have not yet provided a way of identifying those particles, and I still have no way to conclude anything about George. Perhaps those particles now compose a tiger, or remain forming the body of a brainwashed human we would no longer identify as George. There is no escape from ordinary criteria.

There is another possible relation: perhaps framework principles are presupposed by "George is an old-fashioned Catholic" and "George is the same from Sunday to Sunday". This interpretation is provided by Strawson in his Introduction to Logical Theory. Statement A presupposes B if A is neither true nor false unless B is true.[1] Thus "The King of France is bald" is said to presuppose "There exists a King of France". On this account, "George is an old-fashioned Catholic" is neither true nor false unless "George exists" is true. It may also seem right that "George is an old-fashioned Catholic" is neither true nor false unless "George is a substance" is also true. But there are several problems with this suggestion. If I am a Spinozist, I will substitute a different presupposition, perhaps "George is a finite mode of infinite substance". This is not an alternative for "George is a substance" in the way that "George is really alive" might be an alternative presupposition for "George exists". But how can we have two alternative but incompatible presuppositions? The role of "George is a substance" seems more complex than Strawsonian presupposition.

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[1] P. F. Strawson, Introduction to Logical Theory (London: Methune and Co., 1952), p. 174.

Secondly, "substance" is a technical word. If I question speakers in order to elicit presuppositions behind "George is an old-fashioned Catholic" I have to ask technical questions to get an answer about substance. That is, I have to offer a classification scheme which the speaker has not used (for example, I might explain the Aristotelian categories). Then I can ask the speaker where George fits in my scheme. It seems, then, that "George is a substance" is presupposed only if the general principles establishing a certain categorial scheme have already been accepted. This conditional relation does not fit the Strawsonian use of presupposition.

Finally, once the speaker has my categories in mind, he will try to classify George by referring to my criteria for substance. To do this, he will return to ordinary facts about George, stable without framework language. Using these he will try and decide if George is independent and enduring enough to meet my definition of a substance. Although it would take lengthy consideration of examples to clarify it, I think these ordinary facts turn out to be presupposed anyway, even without the detour through "George is a substance". It is therefore not clear what is added by presupposing "George is a substance".

And yet it remains true that something like "George is a substance" is indeed presupposed. Consider "George is an individual", where "individual" is taken in an ordinary sense: to say George is an individual means that he has a recognizable history, that he is not different men each day wearing George-masks, that he is not under the total control

of someone else. There are no framework categories used in these criteria (and paralleled arguments would show that they do not themselves presuppose framework-principles). The whole chain of presuppositions stays within the circle of ordinary language. In some sense, "George is an individual" is presupposed by "George is an old-fashioned Catholic". But not in the Strawsonian sense. "The King of France is bald" is meaningful, but neither true nor false, if there is no King of France. On the other hand, if George isn't an individual, what does "George is an old-fashioned Catholic" mean? We are tempted to say that the statement is ill-founded, or a category-mistake. (Note too that any interpretation that gives it meaning also gives it a truth value: "George is not an individual, but a role played by several spies" lets us determine that it is or is not part of the role for "George" to be an old-fashioned Catholic).

That the subject of propositions like "George is an old-fashioned Catholic" has to be what we ordinarily call an "individual" seems to be a local principle with considerable necessity behind it. If we disobey it, we just do not make a statement. There is no way to reject it and still say "George is an old-fashioned Catholic". (Just as we cannot reject the Queen's move and still play chess). On the other hand, that the subject of statements like "George is an old-fashioned Catholic" has to be what we technically call a "substance" seems to have only a dependent necessity. Spinozists will embrace a different principle. The various technical principles are interpretations of the ordinary

notion of individuality. My point is that the ordinary notion must be presupposed, but no metaphysical one need be. Metaphysical principles have other purposes than guaranteeing ordinary statements which already have their own criteria and presuppositions.

The metaphysician may still contend that you cannot really say "George is an old fashioned Catholic" without presupposing that George is a substance. Faced with the ordinary person who has never heard of substances, the metaphysician would reply that the ordinary man does presuppose that George is an individual with such and such qualities, which are only possible because George is a substance. Then we introduce our Spinozist, who has a different interpretation of individuality. The two metaphysicians begin to argue about what the ordinary man really presupposes. Meanwhile, the ordinary man goes on presupposing that George is an individual. He has no need to wait for the outcome of the argument, since that debate only affects the interpretation of what he is doing. He doesn't need to use or affirm any framework principle in order to talk about George, though a framework principle may be used to interpret what goes on when he does so.

Thus we have to distinguish local and total frameworks. A local framework may require that we presuppose "George is an individual". Total frameworks stand at one remove. Instead of a relation between a principle and a proposition, we have the complex interpretative relation of framework to data. There is no simple two-place relation like "premiss"

or "consequence" or "presupposition". There are too many statements on too many syntatic levels involved, as well as translation rules, and modal operators. Calling metaphysical principles "rules" or "interpretations" is less misleading concerning their complicated relationship than calling them Strawsonian "presuppositions", but such terms give us little detailed descriptions of the relation.

Framework-principles function like rules and introduce an appearance/reality distinction.

There is a distinct move from local to total frameworks. Newtonian science can be seen to illustrate this. By adopting certain laboratory procedures, using certain equations, and accepting certain arguments patterns, I can find that I am committed to universal scientific determinism and a particular view of secondary qualities. There is no reflective construction involved, only a kind of explication. When thinkers realized that Newtonian science demanded these principles, the item available for interpretation became science-plus-these-principles. If, like Kant and Leibniz, they sought a different metaphysics, they found ways to interpret the scientific principles as only local. If they wished to make the scientific principles into a universal framework, they did so. The conversion of such principles into a metaphysics involves the introduction of "transcategorial principles". While Newtonian science presupposes that all its objects are causally determined, this of itself does not say that all entities are so deter-

mined, unless we add the principle "all entities are available to scientific investigation".

The motives for this move to a metaphysical framework will be examined below. Our concern now is the structure of the move. We introduce the new concept "an entity as such" (or "being as such"). With this notion we can seek statements true of any type of entity.

This search lets us ask of local principles: "Are these the principles for any entity as such?" Once we have our transcategorial principles, we can interrelate various local frameworks. We may just treat them as specifications of the more general principles. More frequently, we find that they need some interpretation to make them fit. We can arrange this when we present the local area as data, or when we interrelate various areas.

Consider, for instance, the identity theory of mind which expresses a relationship of reduction for two local areas. This theory is a version of materialism, claiming that mentalistic and physicalistic expressions differ in significance or connotation but, upon inspection, will turn out as a matter of empirical fact to refer to or denote one and the same thing, namely physical phenomena. There is a <u>de facto</u>, not a logical, identity here; it is claimed to be an empirical discovery that water is H_2O, or that lightning is a particular sort of electrical discharge. When Hobbes stated that the feeling of pleasure was really only motion about the heart, he did not make an analytic claim about the synonymy of meanings here; rather, he asser-

ted the synthetic hypothesis that the referent of "a feeling of pleasure" will turn out to be a motion about the heart. To further illustrate this let us examine the assertion that I have in mind finishing this paper.

An identity theorist might criticize me, saying "I understand what you mean, that you intend to finish, not let things drag on, or run off to America. But you say this the wrong way. The 'mind' is not a receptacle or a grasping hand. It cannot 'have something in it'. Besides, you quantify over 'minds', which are mythical entities. In terms of my (i.e. the identity theorist's) framework principles you ought to say something like 'My brain contains the following configurations . . . which involves the following dispositions . . . '"

Working from materialistic principles, the identity theorist has concluded that mentalistic language uses categories and principles that wrongly describe what is. His concern is not my single statement about finishing this paper, but a whole kind of language. He has rules for translating any proposition of that kind. He may or may not say that his translation could replace ordinary mentalistic talk for ordinary purposes, but he will insist that for framework purposes his interpretation is correct.

If he argues for this, he must first defend his framework principles, then use them for a modal argument. The structure of the argument might be the following: From his principle he derives the modal proposition "Impossible (p)" where "p" is some mentalistic statement-form. Or perhaps he concludes that my "p" is ill-formed, the result of a

category-mistake. Using his translation rules, he introduces a proposition "p'" which is supposed to be the correct version of my proposition "p". The value of his modal derivation comes from his ability to use the sameprinciples and rules to draw other conclusions about a wide range of subject matters. Recall the earlier discussion of George's sameness from day to day. Metaphysicians are not interested in proving whether George in fact endures through time, but in accounting for the possibility that he can, and doing so in a way that lets them draw many other conclusions as well. In the case of George, there may be no translation necessary but there is still a modal conclusion.

We can see this modal character of framework principles in another example. A present-day Aristotelian might assert "There are substances, and if anything is a substance it has a nature which expresses itself, is an ultimate subject, and endures through accidental changes". What does this tell us? It can be put two ways. If we emphasize "There are substances" we contrast with other possible metaphysics, such as "There are monads" or "There are actual entities" or "There are prehensions". The statement "There are substances" then tells us which rules are the "correct" ones to use. Ultimate logical subjects are to be talked of in the vocabulary of substances and their qualities, not in that of concrescing actual entities, or windowless monads. We can also emphasize "There are substances", which contrasts with "Substances are logical constructs" or "Substances are ideas". This again tells us how to talk: sub-

stance language is not reducible to other kinds of talk. Substance-explanations need not be further explained.

We sometimes treat frameworks as applying to a range of propositions that have already been reinterpreted to accord with the framework principles. This gives the framework the look of a set of axioms and definitions for a modal logic. Seen this way, the plurality of frameworks resembles alternative axiom systems with their sets of theorems. Everything is neat and sharply defined; we can relate the systems in many precise ways. Under this view constructing frameworks looks like an isolated activity which produces a series of closed systems.

A fuller picture emerges when we take frameworks as applying to all propositions, ontologically correct or not. Then frameworks begin to look like rules for reinterpretation, with more a deontic than an alethic modality. We no longer have a simple deduction; instead we have a complicated activity where propositions are seen in their original context, then presented as data, reformulated if need be, and given a modal status in relation to the principle. This exposes the ragged edges of what can seem a smooth process. There is room for judgment. A given interpretation might fit beautifully with the principles yet be wildly out of touch with its original context.

This complicated process takes ordinary propositions and considers them in the modal context of framework principles even though that modal context is not used in their original function. The result is a kind of "appearance/reality" distinction. This is not, however, the distinc-

tion of "appearance" and "reality" as it might appear within a framework such as Bradley's or Plato's, although some distinction of this sort appears in almost all frameworks. What I am referring to is the distinguishing and reinterpreting that occurs in the use of frameworks. This provides a basis for drawing an explicit appearance/reality distinction within frameworks. Which particular experiences are real and which are unreal is not entailed by the framework, but the framework does provide the context in which we distinguish what may be called "real". I am not speaking of the usual appearance/reality distinction within ordinary language. This concerns the difference between true and false diamonds, or bent sticks in and out of water. You can measure a table with the metre stick that appears bent in the water, but you cannot measure with its fractured cousin. Constructing a framework involves a different distinction. "I see what you mean but you can't put it that way". "Now I see why it is really correct to say it in terms of substances". The practical use of the original statement is not denied. You cannot secure a loan with a fake diamond, but you can convey information, make commands, or perform a wedding with formulations deemed ontologically incorrect. To the identity theorist, my statement about having in mind finishing this paper gives only an appearance of the way things really are, even though the statement is appropriate and successful in its context (i.e. it rightly informs my supervisor of my intentions). Parmenides is the archetypal thinker who accepts ordinary talk as practically useful but refuses to say it describe what really is.

Plato's reaction to Parmenides is the archetypal metaphysical reaction: he does not deny the search for the ways things really are, but he finds more adequate principles.

It is often said that metaphysics consists par excellence in the introduction of new and strange entities. This need not be the case, but whatever entities a framework asserts, the prime activity of the metaphysician becomes interpretation (and, if necessary, reinterpretation) of data. The entities, new or old, furnish only his means. Reinterpretation accomplishes his goals. It is these goals I will now examine.

The metaphysician uses framework-principles for unification, self-criticism, and for dealing with the demands of time.

The metaphysician's goals will show us the context of activity which provides his criteria. His framework has a point; it is not just an "idling of language". We can also find out from the goals whether framework construction is a necessary activity.

The position can be phrased in a Kantian way. Local frameworks are matters of the understanding – the faculty of thinking the objects of sense experience. Metaphysical frameworks, however, come from the faculty of reason – where thinking transcends the conditions of possible experience. Knowledge found or made by the understanding in the area of local frameworks is useful in various and practical ways. Reason, however, is concerned with principles, not rules; it seeks to unify the rules of the understanding under principles.[2] Is there any use for this activity, we

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[2] See W. H. Walsh, Kant's Criticism of Metaphysics (Edinburgh University Press, 1975), pp. 171 and 241-242.

may ask? Are there any "ends to reason" that it serves?

I have argued that metaphysical frameworks are not absolute grounds or starting-points. They presuppose things-to-be-unified-and-interpreted. I am now inquiring about the purpose they serve. As articulated total views, they attempt to remove disunity and conflict about reality, possibility, and importance. When we work at reconstruction they provide room for self-criticism, and help us deal with novelty and change. They do these things by making the appearance/reality distinction mentioned earlier, and by trying to say what really is. They promise us truth; they give us at least unity.

The prime function of a metaphysics is to unify its data. When we find our experience or formulations leading to a conflict about what is real, what is possible, or what is important, we can try to construct a framework which will give us a unified scheme of principles for settling such disputes. For example, we may be scientific realists. As a result we may find ourselves torn various ways about how to describe the reality of mental acts, or persons, or freedom. The conflict is not an idle one. It has impact on our attitudes and self-image, perhaps on our laws and institutions as well. For example, it might influence the techniques of behavioural modification that are made legal. There are many resolutions of this particular conflict. They all involve some use of framework principles to justify eliminating one of the contending descriptions, harmonizing them, hierarchizing them, or reinterpreting them.

Conflict may be over possibility. We have certain religious beliefs, or have had certain peculiar experiences, and wonder if they can be taken literally. Is it possible that there be a life after death, a provident God, a mystical One, telepathy, dreams about the future? Questions about possibility are usually answered by referring to science: "Can we travel to Mars in a week?" What happens when the possibilities in question seem outside present-day science, as in psychic phenomena? Prudent waiting seems advised. But suppose we need a decision now. A dream has ordered us to change our life style because of some impending catastrophe. We may seek out principles about possibility in general. More important, what if the dispute seems disconnected from science as in religious matters? These touch our hopes and fears, our expectations and standards. We may seek proofs; we may seek to know what is possible and what is not, or what follows in other areas if we accept a God or the validity of mysticism. These types of questions lead us to construct frameworks and appeal to their principles.

Conflicts of importance can also arise. We can disagree about what are the important relations, generalizations, structures, or entities amid the multitude of matters of fact we are presented with. "Importance" here is used as that which establishes this rather than that perspective for unifying a multiplicity into a whole. Conflicts of importance concern basic choices of viewpoint and priority. Metaphysicals frameworks articulate such decisions in detail.

"Importance" can also refer to value conflicts. These need not be settled by recourse to conceptual frameworks, but naturalists about value may find themselves drawn into framework questions about reality and possibility in the course of deciding questions of value and obligation.

Because of conflicts, we look for what is <u>really real</u> – a notion which serves as a regulative idea guiding our attempts to unify our experience ever more adequately – <u>really</u> possible, and <u>really</u> important. When we work with frameworks, we do not claim "I have unified my experience" but rather "These are the general principles of reality and possibility". Nevertheless, we choose principles according to their power to unify while accounting for important data.

The conflicts we have been discussing arise within one person. Clearly they can also arise in communities, among different persons, and among different communities. It might seem as if the situation were radically different in the latter cases. Even though I arrive at a framework which unifies my experiences, you may arrive at a different one, and disagreement is translated to a new level. This is possible. But it is also possible that I will be suspended between several frameworks. The frustrating effects of pluralism will be the same in either case, and recourse to violence or separation as solution is as possible within a single person as between several people. The results of framework reconstruction are also the same. Just as I can find myself more unified, so we can find that we have created

a deeper community than before. One of the traditional roles of metaphysics has been the construction of a deeper and so potentially larger community than men's local frameworks and interests allow.

A second goal is self-criticism. Frameworks can demand close scrutiny of some formulation in light of other parts of our experience. They can serve to bring about consistency and harmony, because in a larger conceptual context things that would otherwise remain separate can be made to touch on another. As I will suggest, there is a sense in which frameworks create the problems they solve. Looked at positively this means that they allow new kinds of unification and self-criticism.

The whole enterprise of framework reconstruction exists because we are self-reflective, and can become aware of disunity <u>as</u> disunity. We can also come to question our total view, and see it as one among many possibilities. Since we receive our unreflective total views from our cultural community, where they were once elaborated, framework reconstruction is one way of criticizing that culture and community. Although direct critique of values and institutional patterns is more trenchant, metaphysical analyses do give access to deeper shared beliefs and presuppositions.

We have been speaking of the need for unity and self-criticism. These are not just constant pressures from some static situation. We do not live in a static world; in addition to disunity among our beliefs and commitments, we confront disunity across time and change. We experience

novel challenges to our formulations and beliefs. There are demands put upon our language-games, as well as demands they put upon us. If our situation were basically unchanging, we might do without the unification and criticism metaphysical frameworks provide. Whitehead comments on this:

> In the stabilized life there is no room for Reason. The methodology has sunk from a method of novelty into a method of repetition. Reason is the organ of emphasis upon novelty.[3]

Wittgenstein's charge that metaphysics is idling of language stems in part from seeing the world as settled. He tries to recall us to facts about our language-games as if these games did not change. The only change he speaks of comes discontinuously: We were constituted by game A, now we are constituted by game B. No one brings about the change reflectively; it just happens, though it may start with some one person. Language games do not strain against time and novelty. They are all right as they stand. We are back with Hume's reliance on custom in a stable society.

Once we allow the possibility of self-reflective criticism of language games and frameworks, once we see that we put demands on them as we use them, then change becomes more continuous. It is in part our attempt to keep unity and coherence amid the pressures of novelty. This is not to say we should go to the other extreme and view ourselves as autonomous legislators of language-games and frameworks.

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[3] A. North Whitehead, The Function of Reason (Princeton University Press, 1929), p. 20.

This would be to fall into the dichotomy of making our rules either arbitrary or simply received.

Frameworks can be used to resist change by reformulating novelty away and confining the impact of time. Or they can be used to spread novelty throughout our beliefs and comments. Again Whitehead speaks of a similar point.

> When the novel speculation is produced a threefold problem is set. Some special science, the cosmological scheme and the novel concept will have points of agreement and points of variance. Reason intervenes in the capacity of arbiter and yet with a further exercise of speculation. The science is modified, the cosmological outlook is modified, and the novel concept is modified. The joint discipline has eliminated elements of folly, or of mere omission, from all three. The purposes of mankind receive the consequential modification, and the shock is transmitted through the whole sociological structure of technical methods and of institutions.[4]

In this light philosophical treatments of Darwin and Einstein provide interesting examples of both these reactions to change.[5]

Frameworks themselves exist in time. When we are confronted with multiple total views, we are not confronted by a timeless set of logical entities with timeless logical relations. This may be the way we analyze past frameworks. Since some past options are alive today, some may seem to have that timeless character. But even the old

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[4] Ibid., pp. 86-87.

[5] See Chapter VI in Körner's Categorial Frameworks.

frameworks are presented in a new context with new questions. Our options are unified; they are not systems but promises and suggestions, lines of research which could be pursued, single principles not yet filled-out. Pluralism as we live it does not have the cut-and-dried character we see in historical examples. Instead of deciding among an array of jewel-like philosophical systems, we are asked to decide among programs for philosophy to pursue. The problem of pluralism is ultimately one of practical reason, in Kant's sense. It concerns a choice among possible objects to be created by our efforts and choices, rather than an evaluation of finished and complete wholes.

I have been trying to show that frameworks serve legitimate purposes. In carrying out these goals they may reinterpret their data. This does not amount to claiming frameworks can replace ordinary language for its purposes. Framework principles may find their way into ordinary talk. Reinterpretations may become a new ordinary talk. But none of this says the reinterpretations must be used for ordinary purposes. Although some frameworks may make this claim, it is not necessary.

<u>The goals of metaphysics are legitimate and stem from certain permanent types of disunity.</u>

I have argued that frameworks respond to various kinds of disunity and conflict. They find their justification in dealing with disunity, and their criteria arise from this context and purpose. It may now be asked whether frame-

work-reconstruction is a necessary activity. This question subdivides into two: Are the kinds of disunity we spoke of above a permanent feature of human life? and Is framework reconstruction the only way to deal with them? I will argue that the disunity is indeed permanent, but that there are other programs for resolving it.

Three kinds of disunity were mentioned: (i) disunity due to time and novelty; (ii) similar conflicts between one person or group and another; and (iii) conflicts of one area of experience or formulation with another over reality, possibility, or importance.

The first type, disunity through time, cannot be avoided. We always find ourselves with a partly opaque past that helps make us what we are, hence we can never be sure we know all about ourselves. Even if we try to avoid all novelty from outside, we may find it has been with us all along. As for the future, no matter how much we try to secure ourselves against change we cannot hold on tight to everything. There always remains the kind of change in us and in our world which we wake up to discover has already happened, behind our backs.

Disunity of the second type, among people and groups, cannot be removed. It can be neutralized for long periods of time by enclosing it within some overarching unity, perhaps a cultural wholeness such as Chinese or Indian civilizations have manifested. Allegiance to some common values and ways of life can restrict disunity to a defined area. The alleged "background of Western culture" is due in part to the loss of such unifying commitments and consequent sharp-

ening of conflicts which were there all along.

Even when cultural unity is present it is not allegiance to a common metaphysics. It may include a few metaphysical principles that are almost universally shared, but for the most part it is composed of shared values, ways of acting, and beliefs about the world. All of these can be data for a variety of metaphysics. Although the Greeks may have shared a common principle about the primacy of form, a Plato is not a Democritus. Even the unity of Indian culture, widely considered a shared metaphysics, really consists in an elaborate set of shared goals and practices, a common commitment to the ideal of "liberation" from the material world, moksa, and common belief in some divine ground. These can be expressed in differing frameworks, as can be seen from the disputes among the Hindu schools. A common metaphysics may help express and communicate a cultural unity, but the two are not identical.

Even if all the members of a culture did in fact share a common metaphysics, time and circumstances could lead them to question it. Articulated total views were once chosen from among many possibilities. Although one might become the unreflective definition of "reality" for a group, there is no reason in principle why it could not again be viewed as needing justification or criticism.

It may seem that this last point appeals to some social contract about ontology, or to a mythical Moses of metaphysics who decrees a framework which then becomes "second nature" for his community. My point is that total views

lie on a continuum running from elaborately articulated metaphysical systems to the kind of monochrome totality that results from ruthlessly universalizing a local framework. Simple extension of a local framework can occur without reflection – indeed this happens all too frequently; the resulting conflicts demand thought. Elaborate total views are reactions to disunity; they come from reflective thought, whether that of an individual or of a long group process.

What of the third kind of disunity? It is in many ways the most important. "If everything on our experience fitted together, we would feel no need to tie things together. In such a case the other kinds of disunity would be less burdensome".

But this ideal is an illusion. What would it mean to have everything fit together? There is an image misleading us here. It is as if all the areas of one's life were jigsaw puzzle pieces, so cleverly shaped that they formed a single interlocking whole. If they are flawed, or we were unable to put them together, we would have to erect artificial frames, as we lock in the pieces of a mosaic. This image is striking, but how do we apply it? What are the pieces of our lives? Presumably things like religion, political beliefs, science, career goals, the colour red, matter, the heavens above us and the moral law within us. How do these "go together"? The image deceives us by confusing different kinds of unity. There is the unity of individual psychological integration, which

can be achieved in various ways. There is also the unity of a society and way of life where everything has its place. These unities can be worked at, and when they are achieved we ought to picture them as organisms, not puzzles. Yet even smoothly functioning social organisms can be questioned and interpreted in a framework. Members of the society may not have a motive to do so, but it is possible. If the image of "everything fitting together" seeks these unities, we can understand how it applies or does not apply, and still learn nothing about framework unity.

Imagine a landscape where everything fits together without any imposed plan, or think of scientific data which obligingly arrange themselves into a smooth curve as the figures are recorded. Could the pieces of our lives fit together in this way? Such images are behind the feeling we have that there must be only one framework. But what would it mean to apply these images? How could the pieces of our lives be different for them to fit together better? What would have to be different about our politics, or our science, or our experience of sensation, or matter? What could it mean to say they could fit together in ways they do not? If we exclude social and psychological disharmony what does it mean to say that they do not fit together?

I suggest it does not mean anything! Aside from psychological and social unification, the pieces of our lives do not <u>in themselves</u> either fit or fail to fit together. What frameworks unify are <u>formulations</u>. My

experience of matter and my politics neither fit together nor conflict. They just are what they are. We can obtain descriptions of the experiences, presuppositions, local frameworks — these are what can conflict and fail to fit together.

Even formulations do not conflict unless they are brought into contact. For instance, they might be relevant to the same decision. They might be conflicting descriptions of "the same entity" — as in the conflict of science and common sense over mental language. They might be conflicting descriptions of "entities in general" — as in the conflict of science and religion over the ultimate type of causation. They might be conflicting descriptions of "entity as such" — as in disputes over transcategorial principles. Formulating the conflicts in terms of "entities as such" is what allows them to be resolved by frameworks. It is also what demands framework-resolution.

Our experience contains diverse elements and formulations. Various areas may presuppose different local frameworks. This diversity is a fact. It seems a contingent fact but when we try to specify how it might have been different we run into problems. I have been contending that the feeling our experience could be more unified than it is translates with no remainder into images for psychological and social wholeness. We think of experience as a senseless whole where each part fits in with every other without the need of formulation and unifying concepts — all we have to do is discover this unity. Such unity is a myth. It is an illicit importation of social or psycho-

logical wholeness, or else an elevation of brute coexistence. There is no synthesis without synthesizing, no articulated unity without articulation. Without formulation and articulation I have neither unity nor conflict among the pieces of my life. Coexistence by itself neither raises nor solves any problems. Problems arise with the addition of some drive to unity which makes mute diversity into disunity. We have already considered some of the reasons we might come to feel the diversity of our frameworks as a disunity.

Disunity can be met in other ways than by using metaphysical frameworks.

We can now approach our second question: Is framework-reconstruction a necessary response to disunity? As noted earlier, there is a sense in which frameworks create the problems they solve. The disunity they deal with has to be treated a certain way before it becomes amenable to framework-resolution.

Is there an alternative then? We could avoid having any reflective totalization at all. We can try to keep our experiences or our social way of life and unreflective frameworks as a background we never look at, and we can deal only with issues as they arise in the foreground.

More precisely asked: Is there an alternative to metaphysical frameworks once the diversity of our experience and formulations has become a matter of conscious awareness or concern? When we see the diverse areas and formulations as diverse, can we avoid unifying them by a framework?

The distinctive move that allows and demands metaphysical frameworks is the formulation of disunity in terms of the concept of "entity as such" and transcategorial principles. If we can avoid these moves we can avoid metaphysics. This would mean: (a) accepting the rules and criteria of ordinary language (such as, in the earlier example "George is the same from Sunday to Sunday" with the ordinary criteria for asserting it); (b) accepting the implied local frameworks of various areas and activities (such as demand that George be an "individual"); and (c) not affirming any of these as principles about "being" or "entities as such". Local frameworks are still treated as local with no claim to universal status, and no universal principles about "being" are affirmed.

We are talking about a different way of meeting the problem of disunity, not about a way of avoiding it. There is a totalization involved, but not in terms of "being". What we are speaking of is the program of a self-conscious philosophical therapy which breaks the traditional link between "object of knowledge" and "being", which is presupposed by both realism and idealism. Principles claiming universal validity about being are either argued away or treated as generalizations, which lack the power to bring about reinterpretation of local framework principles. This amounts to a refusal to make the strong appearance/reality distinction, or to apply modal categories to ordinary discourse in the way described earlier.

To accomplish this the local principles themselves must be seen in a different light. Localprinciples seem to make existence claims for different types of objects. If we view them as defining different regions of "entities", we have already set the stage for metaphysics. So we must reinterpret what it means for local principles to be true, and what it means for them to make existence claims. If we want to break the link between "object of knowledge" and "being" we must supply an alternative account of what it is to be an object of knowledge, or what it means to affirm a proposition. Wittgenstein's interpretation of when asserting a proposition is a fitting move to make in a given language-game is an example of such an alternative account.

As a result of this alternative account, local frameworks are never presented as data for metaphysics. Since their principles are not viewed as asserting necessary connections among regions of "entities", we never ask the question "Are these principles valid for all entities"? Nevertheless, by its emphasis on the local nature of all principles, the alternative approach does allow us to prune back the unwarranted extensions of local principles which are one source of the conflicts that lead to metaphysics. Indeed, Wittgenstein spends much of his time doing just this. Questions of priority and importance are also dealt with, but as matters requiring "therapy" or existential decision. No framework-resolution of such questions is needed since the various local areas are never brought into contact, and translation of one area's principles into another kind of language

is impossible. The resulting diversity can be simply accepted, because unity is found on the more primal level of practice. This common origin in human practice allows us to see local principles in a unified way, but not in terms of an articulated unity of their objects. For the metaphysical system of principles about objects or entities, this approach substitutes a detailed and interrelated study of uses, language-games, or forms of life.

Wittgenstein is the leading modern representative of this program. It is an alternative which can be pursued, although the changes it demands go deep. Its existence shows that frameworks are only one possible response to disunity.

Wittgenstein's "alternative program" to metaphysical construction.

In the alternative program Wittgenstein emphasizes the active and ongoing, the lived linguistic situation. As part of the language game which is actually played, any comment made in that situation must be in order as it is; the meaning of an utterance is understood, according to Wittgenstein, when seen only in this context, what people intend to do when they say what they say. There is thus no question of dismissing any comment, and there is no attempt to describe the world the way it "really is" for that is not what is meant in the situation. Wittgenstein is not saying that we cannot misuse language, or fail to follow the rules of a language game properly. What is denied is a purpose beyond the given context of the practiced linguistic activity.

The alternative program is a defence of common sense. If an expression has a use in ordinary, non-philosophical language, then that fact is taken as exempting it from philosophical criticism. Wittgenstein's argument here is that an actual use implies proper use. Now it is true that we would be surprised if a philosophical argument proved that modern science was a fraud. It would take more than clever arguments to make us give up our political, moral and legal practices. And it would take more than philosophical analysis to make us seriously wonder if there is anything to religion. With Wittgenstein I do not want to deny the content of the concepts we act and live with. But we may also observe that spiritualism and astrology can be described as well established linguistic practice, as can witchcraft and magic in some cultures. And yet these are easier to doubt. The reason for this ease, however, is the lack of our own commitment; it is a question of our own interests, not the establishment of the practice. We must then ask if the claim that "this game is played" entitles an existing linguistic activity to be respected just because it is practiced?

The claim of the self-sufficiency of ongoing linguistic practices and the argument that ordinary language is "alright as it is" are developed in detail and criticized in the Appendix. I mention Wittgenstein's view here as the alternative to metaphysical programs merely to emphasize the active need for metaphysics. In the main, I suggest three failings of this alternative program — failings which all admit a theoretical element for a more comprehen-

sive view than the immediate language game playing allows.

(1) Admitting the autonomy of various linguistic practices does not eliminate the problem of sorting out and explaining how disparate forms or frameworks can coexist. We do not live in a world of only one linguistic type of practice. We admit varying degrees of importance for each of many accepted frameworks. The alternative program is unable to comment on this hierarchy, to explain how they relate. And to work out the view of whether science dominates religion or art, or morality dominates science, and so forth, is the task of metaphysics. The alternative program does not meet this challenge.

(2) The alternative view asserts an overall view about all language games when arguing the significance of local frameworks as local. If the various claims of the scientist, theologian and moralist all account for different descriptions for different purposes of a given situation in human experience, and if in doing this it is claimed that there exists no conceptual, ideological or moral conflict in making these various claims, then there is assumed a theoretical view of this given situation. And that given situation, its description from various perspectives, is the business of metaphysics. The alternative program thus admits a comprehensive view when claiming the autonomy of each linguistic practice.

(3) The alternative program claims that ordinary language works effectively in getting its job done. It also claims that ordinary language is free of philosophical

paradoxes and problems, and that ordinary language should be used as the standard for adjudicating philosophical disputes. This is to equate common sense, as embodied in ordinary language, with philosophy. But I want to suggest that ordinary language taken in its ordinary sense includes various puzzles and paradoxes which give rise to traditional philosophical problems. Can one then appeal to the source of the puzzlement as the criterion for deciding when they have been correctly resolved? Whether or not this can be done, we must also observe that in attempting to do so we have raised ordinary language to the status of a philosophical criterion, and in doing this one has engaged in a mode of discourse which would never have been uttered by ordinary people, in ordinary language with common sense meanings. This activity of the alternative program clearly refutes itself. For it offers an interpretation of philosophy while (in that interpretation) claiming that an interpretation of philosophy cannot be made. Once again we see practices within a given context reaching beyond themselves; the call for metaphysics is again heard.

<u>But even with the alternative program, there are pressures in experience to return to metaphysical thinking</u>.

I have described an alternative program to metaphysical construction and pointed out its inherent failures; as a theory it cannot eliminate metaphysics. Next I want to describe more immediate pressures working within local areas that direct us to metaphysical systems. The cost of the alternative is high, for the problem of plurality, this time the various accounts of knowledge, must still be met.

The alternative to reflective totalization is the attempt to keep our experiences, our social way of life and our local frameworks as a background we do not directly look at, a way in which we deal with issues only as they arise within the given language game. But there is always the possible danger that disunity itself will be an issue that arises. For example, science causes difficulties. If we accept scientific realism in any form, we are driven towards questions when scientific descriptions conflict with others – situations where science, religion or morality make claims about the same event. Such conflict tends to reintroduce the concept "alternative descriptions of the same entity" and with this concept we are on the road to metaphysics once again. Another example: new technologies may pose moral problems that involve relating hitherto separate areas of activity and discourse. The acceptance of psychological findings has modified recent thought about criminal responsibility. Pleas of temporary insanity and social deprivation are considered legitimate. In recent years, then, it seems that the deterministic overtones of the social sciences have spread beyond the bounds inside which they have traditionally been. Moral praise and blame seem to be diminishing in degree of responsibility as a result of scientific discoveries. There is here the threat that a language game which has been played may cease to be played, or to be significantly modified in form. Possibilities which were not considered fifty years ago are accessible today. This means that, contrary to Wittgenstein, perhaps

not all confidently played language games are equally well played.

In general, this means that agreement among the practitioners of an ongoing linguistic activity does not fully protect it from fault or criticism. And thus we may say that for a linguistic discourse to "make sense" more than an internal sense is required. Consider the purposes and activities of a religious discourse. Whether or not true, religious language makes sweeping claims that are hard to treat adequately without some reference to the notion of "entities as such" or transcategorial principles. Although primarily practical and not theoretical, the internal sense of religious practices must also assume certain otherwise independent facts. We pray about things or events in the world, beyond the religious context. If God did not really exist, we could not make legitimate sense of the religious language of prayer. For if an accepted notion is to be legitimate it must also have its connection with other sides of experience. And that is to get beyond its internal sense. But getting a more connected and coherent picture is exactly the business of metaphysics.

The above remarks on religion are not meant as an argument in the philosophy of religion, but to emphasize that theoretical commitments are involved in non-theoretical uses of language. This opens the door beyond the immediate perspective of the alternative program and onto the area of metaphysical thinking.

The alternative program replaces self-criticism with self-recollection. We are reminded of the rules of our language game and form of life. We are brought up against

fundamental given determinations of our subjectivity. But is this move an adequate substitution? Wittgenstein is often reproached for imprisoning us in given language games. This can lead to serious problems when dealing with diversity. Wittgenstein has no political philosophy to help us deal with ideological conflict; he only remarks that "you play your game, we play ours". Against this, I suggest that we have recourse to metaphysics to meet this difficulty, and that we are not persuaded by the alternative program that no general theory of politics is needed.

Another problem is that the alternative program capitulates to change. Language games alter by a kind of eruption. Now there is something correct about this, but is there not more to it than that? The alternative program seems to overlook our self-conscious attempts to bring about and deal with novelty in our thought and language.

These various considerations do not invalidate the alternative program. What they show is that even in the middle of the most successful philosophical alternative to framework reconstruction, there are pressures (and indeed certain needs) to return to metaphysical frameworks. This reinforces my conclusion that frameworks are legitimate and, even if only contingent, at least hard to escape. I have argued that metaphysical frameworks serve certain purposes and help resolve certain conflicts: I will next discuss how this can be maintained in the face of pluralism.

Chapter Four

A DEFENCE OF PLURALISM

The plurality of frameworks is a permanent feature of the human situation.

Philosophers recognize the problem of pluralism when they produce arguments against other frameworks than their own. Diverse metaphysical frameworks cannot coexist peacefully; they cannot be treated as local areas to be harmonized by assigning them portions of some larger field. The role of metaphysics cannot be shared because it claims to describe the principles of reality and possibility for entities as such, and thus it claims to possess the whole field. It can only treat other frameworks as enemies or as diminished parts of itself. And thus the totalizing move in metaphysics makes pluralism a problem rather than just a condition.

In this chapter I want to show that the plurality of frameworks we find throughout history and present philosophy is not a removable feature of our situation. I will argue against various attempts to discredit all but one framework or to show a priori that pluralism is false. These ways try to remove pluralism by some special argument about frameworks in general, rather than arriving at one framework by the patient comparison which concludes that one framework is better than all the rest. I do not mean to exclude this latter kind of argument, which will be discussed in the next chapter. This chapter, then, is a defence of pluralism.

Appeals to a direct intuition of reality fail to provide a criterion for the truth of frameworks.

The simplest way to remove pluralism is to argue that one framework is true and all others false. A way to do so is to claim that framework principles can be directly compared with reality. They either correspond or they don't; those who hold false frameworks have not compared frameworks and reality diligently enough. The problem arises then of how we are able to carry out the comparison. The most straightforward answer is by intuition.

But appeals to intuition are difficult to handle. The first reaction is often an ad hominem attack: "Do you mean to say that you see it as such and all of the rest don't"? Now it is possible that this situation could hold, and most philosophers end up saying that vast numbers of other thinkers are wrong. In order to avoid unnecessary complications, I will not argue for or against a direct intuition of reality. Rather, I will take an "even if" position. I am not sure whether we can have immediate intuition of things, but even if we do, we cannot avoid framework pluralism. Direct intuition of reality may help locate a realm of discourse but it does not determine the structure and content of that discourse.

To support this claim it may be argued that a direct intuition of reality would consist of either a simple or complex datum. If it is simple, an intuition can provide no criteria for framework arguments. There is merely the fact of the datum. If, on the other hand, the intuition is complex it may indeed provide some criteria. The complexity

would be a relationship or unity that would favour one framework more than another. But this latter description of the structure of an immediate intuition appears contradictory, for how can the intuition be direct and yet complex? The immediate intuition may be described as synthetic; that is, not in the sense of Kant's analystic-synthetic distinction but rather it may be synthetic in the sense of his notion of transcendental synthesis. This type of synthesis is aimed at producing a unity which is said to be necessary for any object to be an object. The Kantian transcendental synthesis does not make one object a house and another a ship. For these differences we depend on differences in sense intuitions. But it does make every object (whether it be a house or a ship) a substance with accidents, an extensive quantity, and so forth. But even if the structure of the immediate intuition is like this, we must admit that it is already being described in the language of a specific metaphysics, for there are alternative interpretations of experience. The required synthetic but immediate intuition thus begs the question of a framework criterion; it cannot direct our arguments for the one framework because it is already presented in the context of some other (contingent) framework.

Again, the idea of a synthetic but direct intuition of reality may seem to be contradictory for if it is synthetic it is not truly immediate. I agree that something is, to say the least, complex with this notion and yet it also seems that most people who talk of direct access to

reality do mean something synthetic. They do not claim to intuit Kant's manifold of sensation, or James' "blooming, buzzing confusion". They are not usually talking of the aesthetic contemplation of sensory qualities for their own sake. Although this is surely possible, it has even less connection with frameworks than the intuitions I am discussing here. The Zen master may, for instance, perceive directly a rock. This experience makes use of categorizations; it makes use of ordinary language categories and their ordinary presuppositions. The "rock" is something that has lain around a long time, is hard to move, can be broken up in certain ways, has such and such texture, etc. These criteria are framework-neutral. That is, in a non-philosophical, non-reflective sense, in an everyday sense that we experience the rock, these criteria are neutral; they are the source for reflective characterizations (e.g. extension, mass and so forth). But being framework-neutral as such is not the answer, it is not the direct intuition of reality providing form to our everyday experience of the rock but is rather the problem of how that rock is to be characterized. If ordinary-language objects and its rules are open to various framework interpretations when talked about, they are also open to interpretations when contemplated. The Zen master's intuition does not settle the case between Aristotelian and Whiteheadean analyses of the rock. Such intuitions may, at times, make direct use of metaphysical frameworks. Aristotle does not contemplate the spheres and movers merely by staring at points of light in the sky.

His entire science and metaphysics enters into determining the object of his contemplation. This sort of experience could scarcely be asked to serve as a criterion among frameworks.

I have said that such experiences "make use of" categorizations. This is not the same as affirming them. The Zen master's contemplation will not be invalidated if the "rock" turns out to be a stage prop (although his instructions to the gardener might be invalidated). Aristotle's experience remains a sophisticated and valuable human activity even though his astronomy is wrong. Nonetheless, such experiences do not give us "untouched" reality for use as a criterion in framework decisions. These experiences contain either too little categorization ("this rock") or too much ("spheres and movers"); in either case they furnish no satisfactory role for a comparison.

And what if the experiences contain no categorization at all? This, after all, is the usual claim. We are told of an immediate contact with reality which avoids any synthesizing activity, dualistic splits, or analysis of its objects. I have indicated my scepticism about this. But even presuming it does happen, this is of no help. For if these were non-synthetic intuitions, they could not tell us how to synthesize. They would furnish no determinate rules for deciding between ways of synthesizing. If I am overwhelmed by the suchness and presence of this rock, I may have learned a lesson about the subsidiary role of all frameworks, but the lesson does not tell me to choose Whitehead over Aristotle. The Zen master would not approve my working with him in order to decide between rival meta-

physics. The usual intent of his training would be to stop framework construction altogether. If the intuitions have any influence, it would be to move us away from frameworks and toward something like the "alternative program" of Wittgenstein discussed earlier.

On the other hand, the existence of such intuitions would be a datum of great importance. Any framework could be challenged to provide for their possibility. The role played by the fact of such intuitions might be crucial, though no different than therole played by any other fact, such as high-energy physics or moral behaviour. I am suggesting that while the content of such intuitions (synthetic or not) provides no criterion for framework decisions, the fact of such intuitions may well be an important guide.

Phenomenological techniques will not provide direct inspection of metaphysical necessities.

There is also a more elaborate appeal to intuition which moves directly to a framework. Phenomenological techniques are said to produce intuitions of necessary connections among meanings. No comparison between frameworks and reality is needed; we simply look at the meanings in question, and read off the correct total framework. The problem is to "simply look". Now I do not deny that such methods can produce impressive results when used on more clearly defined local areas, but I question their use to arrive at a total framework. This would involve using phenomenological methods upon such meanings as "thing",

"being", "relation", "existence". Disagreement about the extent and results of the intuition cast doubts on the access of such meanings. The method needs some recourse against producing diverse results. This is found in the various purifications contained in the phenomenological reductions. These are supposed to reduce the subject to a pure observer and his world to a pure phenomenon. Such standards of purification allow decisions among rival intuitions. Thus the use of phenomenology against pluralism depends on the success of the reductions. Without them, our intuitions are not direct, but depend on many different ways of presenting and judging the data. If our intuitions always come from such conditioned viewpoints, they remain contingent on historical determinations and do not attain the necessity needed to banish pluralism. Their results can always be transcended and questioned from some new point of view. For the same reason, adopting the method and the reductions must itself be a pure act, without determining context, or all its results will lack the required necessity. I will in another section attack the possibility of purifying the observing subject. If successful, that attack will also deny the appeal to phenomenological reductions.

Because of the complex relation between frameworks and data, no appeal to "the facts" can be conclusive against pluralism.

Since a doctrine of intuition does not furnish criteria for judging frameworks, we must examine other ways to defend the claim that only one framework is true. Perhaps we should

"let the data decide". Just as a scientific theory must fit observations, so a philosophic framework must come to terms with a great variety of data. The better framework will be the one which deals with more of the data or deals with the data more adequately. This principle is compatible with pluralism; indeed, it will be eagerly affirmed in the next chapter (although there are difficulties in giving content to "more adequately"). To turn this into an argument against pluralism as such, it must be strengthened.

We would have to claim that the data ultimately support only one framework. I have already shown how complex is the way frameworks and data are brought together. It would be convenient if the philosophers were in the position of the scientist who (supposedly) decided between competing theories by triumphantly pointing to a meter reading. Unfortunately, data and frameworks never confront one another immediately. What would it mean to "confront" a materialist metaphysics with ordinary talk about minds? Hidden under the metaphor of "confrontation" is a long process: we must describe mentalistic talk and show why it is important. This involves finding rules and local principles, judging what are the important features and what issues they raise, suggesting or denying translations into other languages, making judgments of priority about the interrelations of various kinds of experience and discourse. All these demand perception and judgment; none are automatic procedures. There is room for difference.

Thus although accounting for data is what frameworks are all about, and although the data are always there before us, there is no one framework-neutral description of data ready to be used as a criterion. Only within a defined philosophical school that devotes itself to clearly agreed-on issues can we assemble a neutrally described body of data that furnishes conclusive tests. This does not happen on the broader philosophical scene.

Still, we do use data in framework argument. By various methods of analysis and description we discover local frameworks, identities, distinctions, and necessary connections among concepts and propositions. These, together with observations on things and facts relevant to philosophical argument, discussions of the context of argument and principles, and summaries of historical developments, make up a loose class of statements relevant to framework arguments.

We select from this class of statements and juxtapose them to framework claims:

> Remember Descartes' point that you can think of half a material object but not half of a self-consciousness?
>
> How do you square that with the distinction between <u>ought</u> and <u>is</u>?
>
> What about the political context?
>
> How does your account do justice to religious language?
>
> But if you say X then you have to conclude (or presuppose, or deny, or qualify) Y.

> You realize, don't you, that using the concept A commits you to using the concept B as well?
>
> Your program has resemblances to what the X-teenth century Y-ists tried to do, and we all know what happened to them.
>
> The logical grammar of P's and Q's is different.

A framework has to deal with such data. They can be cited as counter-examples, or as instances of the failure of a program. They can be imported as additional premisses which must be admitted and then generate inconsistencies. They may show disharmony between an affirmation and its context, or give an air of unreality to a conclusion. On the other hand, the framework maker has many ways of dealing with these "facts". He can accept them and interpret them in his framework. He can use them as premisses, conclusions, examples; he can deny them, reinterpret them, attract the concepts used in their formulation, explain what they "really mean" or what issues are "really at stake", find and deny hidden presuppositions, give "correct analyses", or show "correct priorities". Aside from strictly internal criticism, this sort of discussion is the staple of philosophical argument.

I will now consider an example of this appeal to facts on both sides of a philosophical dispute. In their argument over the Meditations, Descartes, Hobbes, and Gassendi all invoke data which they take to be self-evident and destructive of the other side's position. Each also tries to argue away data presented by the other side.

In his objections Gassendi suggests that dualism cannot be maintained in view of the obvious affinities between human and animal behaviour, and the effect of the body on thought.

> You will have to prove at the same time that the soul of the brutes are incorpeal, viz. those which think, or, over and above the functioning of the external senses, are aware of something internal, not only while awake, but when dreaming. Again, you must prove that this solid body contributes absolutely nothing to your thinking (though you never existed without it nor have ever hitherto had any thought in isolation from it), and that your thinking is hence independent of it; so that you can neither be impeded nor disturbed by the foul and dense vapours or fumes, which sometimes so afflict the brain. [1]

> But I should be loth to be troublesome with my enquires, or to reflect whether you remember what your thoughts were when in the womb, or in the days, months, and years succeeding your birth; or, if you replied that you had forgotten, to ask why this was so. Yet I suggest that you should remember how obscure, how meagre, how nearly nonexistent your thought must have been during those periods of life. [2]

Descartes' reply to this attack illustrated two ways of dealing with such troublesome facts. He admits the influence of the body on the mind, but interprets it according

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[1] Rene Descartes, The Philosophical Works of Descartes trans. Elizabeth Haldane and G. R. T. Ross, vol II (Cambridge University Press, 1912), Objection V, p. 140.

[2] Ibid., Objection V, p. 141.

to his framework. The body is an instrument and "a workman does not get good results as long as he uses a bad instrument".[3] Here Descartes accepts the fact but interprets it differently. Second, he dismisses some questions as out of place.

> . . . since you often demand an argument from me, when you, O flesh, possess none yourself, and since the 'onus' of the proof presses on you, we must note that, in philosophizing correctly, there is no need for us to prove the falsity of all those things which we do not admit because we do not know whether they are true. We have merely to take the greatest care not to admit as true what we cannot prove to be true.[4]

Descartes then gives a summary of his proof of dualism from the distinct concepts of mind and matter, and then writes:

> But when you add <u>that I must also prove that the soul of brutes are incorporeal, and that solid matter contributes nothing to thinking</u>, you . . . show that you do not know on whom the onus of proof lies, . . . I merely say that this is by no means the place for the consideration of such matters.[5]
>
> [Y]our queries about the brutes are not relevant here, since the mind when communing with itself can experience the fact that it thinks, but has no evidence of this kind as to whether or not the brutes think; it can only come to a conclusion afterwards about this matter by reasoning <u>a posteriori</u> from their actions.[6]

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[3] <u>Ibid</u>., p. 209.
[4] <u>Ibid</u>., Reply to Objection V, p. 211.
[5] <u>Ibid</u>., pp. 209-210.
[6] <u>Ibid</u>., Reply to Objection V, p. 211.

Descartes here distinguishes some facts and questions and types of evidence from others. He uses certain ones to establish a framework within which he will deal with others. Descartes is claiming that he has the right first to establish his ontological conclusions and then try to deal with the issues Gassendi brings up. An example of how he would proceed to deal with them is clear from his reply to Gassendi's question whether, given dualism, we are always thinking. He replies that we are indeed always thinking, and we cannot remember thoughts from our time in the womb because memory requires a corporeal trace which the infant's body was incapable of receiving. This may not be a happy explanation to Gassendi, but it does "save the phenomena".

The same situation occurs in reverse. Descartes makes much of the distinction in kind between conception and imagination. Gassendi wishes to make the distinction one of degrees of clarity, thus preserving the continuity between man and animal. Descartes replies that this cannot be done, and cites facts.

> Moreover it is false that the thinking of a Chiliagon is confused; for many deductions can be drawn from it most clearly and distinctly, which would not occur if it were perceived only in a confused manner or, as you say, merely <u>in respect of the force of the name</u>. But as a matter of fact we perceive intellectually the whole figure at the same time although we are not able to imagine it as a whole at the same time; which proves that the two powers of understanding and imagining differ,

> not so much in respect of more or less, but as two wholly diverse modes of operation.[7]

> And although, when imagination or sensation is intense (as occurs when the brain is troubled or disturbed), the mind does not readily find room for thinking of other matters, yet we experience the fact that, when imagination is not so strong, we often understand something entirely diverse from it; for example, when we sleep we perceive that we are dreaming, while in having the dream we must employ the imagination; yet our awareness of the fact that we are dreaming is an act of the intellect alone.[8]

A debate about what the data are can be conclusive; Descartes is right. Gassendi is wrong. It is, of course, another matter to go from the distinction to an ontological dualism, but a distinction is proven and to be dealt with later.

When Descartes replies to Hobbes the matter of distinction between imagination and conception comes up again. In this case it is Descartes who points to facts to refute a theory of Hobbes. The issue is whether or not conceiving can be reduced to the manipulation of language. Hobbes maintains:

> But what shall we now say, if reasoning chance to be nothing more than the uniting and stringing together of names or designations by the word is? It will be a consequence of this that reason gives us no conclusion about the nature of things, but only about the terms that designate them, whether, indeed, or not there is a

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[7] Ibid., Reply to Objection V, p. 229.

[8] Ibid., Reply to Objection V, p. 212.

> connection (arbitrarily made about their meanings) according to which we join these names together. If this be so, as is possible, reasoning will depend on names, names on the imagination, and imagination, perchance, as I think, on the motion of the corporeal organs. Thus mind will be nothing but the motions in certain parts of an organic body.[9]

And then Descartes asserts that . . .

> in reasoning we unite not names but the things signified by the names; and I marvel that the opposite can occur to anyone. For who doubts whether a Frenchman and a German are able to reason in exactly the same way about the same things, though they yet conceive the words in an entirely diverse way? And has not my opponent condemned himself in talking of conventions arbitrarily made about the meaning of words? For, if he admits that words signify anything, why will he not allow our reasonings to refer to this something that is signified, rather than to the words alone?[10]

As the debate stands, Descartes' facts refute Hobbes' claim that he can adequately translate talk about meanings into talk about words. A modern nominalist might rush to Hobbes' defence by disclaiming the notion of convention and giving a sophisticated account of translation. In doing so, he would be performing the same interpretation of seemingly inconvenient data which Descartes performed against Gassendi.

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[9] Ibid., Objection IV, p. 65.

[10] Ibid., Reply to Objection IV, p. 66.

A further point worth noting is that Descartes' data may disprove Hobbes' precise formulations, but Hobbes' program of accounting for meaning and reasoning as some function of language use has been revived and continued. Data do not seem to furnish absolute barriers to programs of framework construction. Consider the distinction of imagination and conception. We find Hobbes, Gassendi, Hume, and Leibniz joined in denying any distinction, while Descartes, Kant, Sellars, Plotinus, and Bergmann affirm it.[11] We must conclude that it can be adapted to a great variety of programs and frameworks. Similarly, if we accept as given both the fact of bodily influence on thought and the distinction between imagination and conception, we can still go in opposite directions depending on which we take to be ontologically significant. Descartes accepts both but takes the distinction to be significant. He is then committed to interpreting the bodily influence so as not to have it interfere with his program. Sellars, on the other hand, takes the materialist road signified here by the bodily influences. He is then committed to interpreting the distinction between imagination and conception in such a way that it does not provide unacceptable entities or actions to mar his ontology. It does not seem that the distinction, or bodily influence, by themselves,. settle the issues involved. Data do not furnish decisive arguments against a program, although they may disqualify a given way of implementing the program. Both points are important. Although programs can be revived, specific

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[11] See Albert Levi, Literature, Philosophy and the Imagination (Indiana University Press, 1962).

proposed frameworks can be disqualified. Taken jointly, these two points support the thesis that although pluralism is unavoidable we can still have reason for framework choice.

Although data cannot be used as a test which will screen out all frameworks but one, there is another way to attack pluralism by citing data. This is the claim that all the data "fit together" into one framework. While I have already explained my reservations about the image of "everything fitting together naturally", there are ways that the image might seem to fit here.

We obtain local frameworks by various methods I have grouped as "analysis and descriptions". Is it possible that these methods by themselves will give us a total framework, thus sparing us the complex process of judgment and construction? It might seem that the areas investigated by local methods would cover the whole field of being, and account for everything. But what field is being covered? None of the regional frameworks has a synoptic view that would either reveal a field of being or know when it was completely covered. By investigating a given area we do not necessarily locate that area in a broader context, unless that context is presupposed, or we have some Hegelian movement of internal relations among areas.

Consistency tests can be used to disqualify single frameworks but not to remove pluralism.

So far I have considered two means of arguing against pluralism. The conclusion has been that while appeals to

intuition and data have an important place in deciding among frameworks, they cannot be used to support the stronger conclusion that only one framework is correct.

I will now consider how consistency tests can be used in framework arguments. As with the appeal to data, such tests operate on two levels. We can use them to disqualify suggested frameworks. This is a valid process but compatible with pluralism. We can also try to show that there is in principle only one consistent framework.

The number of suggested frameworks can be reduced by showing various candidates to be internally inconsistent. This is effective when the inconsistency is wholly in terms of a framework's own concepts and categories. If, on the other hand, the inconsistency results from importing some principles, the argument is weaker. The real debate becomes the status of the imported principle, for example, the principle of verification used to criticize classical metaphysics. More subtle versions show up in arguments between closely related schools, where frameworks differ only slightly and importation of foreign principles is harder to detect.

Even in the case of outright inner contradiction things are not as simple as we might wish. Suppose it is true that A's framework contains a glaring inner inconsistency. This does disqualify it. But what part of it, what is "it", that is disqualified? Suppose that A revises his framework, keeping his leading principles but changing others so that the inconsistency is avoided. Has A's framework

been rejected and a new one substituted? Or are we dealing with a patched-up version of the same framework? The answer to these questions is a matter of definition, but the point at stake is that claims of inner inconsistency only disqualify the precise formulation used to derive the inconsistency. I may point out an inconsistency in X's statement of idealism. I have no right to claim that I have refuted idealism unless I also claim that the inconsistency is generated by a set of principles which must be included in any framework which is to bear the name of idealism. Someone might then produce an almost-idealistic framework which would be immune to my attack. This reinforces my view that philosophical programs are very hard to kill.

Although inconsistency disqualifies specific formulations, it cannot guarantee that the rejected framework, or one very like it, will not be resurrected. New suggestions remain possible, and consistency tests only work on concrete suggestions. Thus there is no way to use such tests to reduce the plurality of frameworks to unity. Even if I showed <u>all</u> other known frameworks to be inconsistent, this would not absolutely vindicate my own, since I could not guarantee that no new consistent framework would arise.

One way to disqualify a whole program is by finding an inconsistency in its goal. The identity theory of mind-body relations sets out to claim an identity and a reduction at the same time. We are to be shown that mental states are equivalent to physical states and that only physical state

language is ontologically correct. That is, we are to be shown a relation which is both symmetrical and asymmetrical. This is inconsistent, and it seems that such criticism is conclusive against all versions of the program attacked. Yet a modified version of the goal could be proposed, as in the "disappearance version" proposed by Richard Rorty where the symmetrical relation is dropped.[12]

If we want an argument against pluralism as such, we must strengthen our claims. We must hold that there can in principle be only one consistent framework. This claim seems refuted by thepresence of many frameworks, each consistent as far as we know, but, like the argument for the best of all possible worlds, the argument for one consistent framework does not need empirical surveys. Hartshorne's version of this runs as follows.[13] We enlarge the notion of consistency somewhat, to include "comprehensive coherence". Metaphysical concepts are necessarily involved in each other's meanings; they cohere together to form systems. Such systems are used to illuminate and unify areas of experience. There can only be one system which makes comprehensive sense out of everything because if there were more than one, there would be an incoherence in reality or in our knowing, and we can admit neither.

It should be clear that this is no longer an argument <u>from</u> consistency but an argument from various principles about knowing and reality <u>to</u> a notion of consistency. The crucial claims concern the nature of metaphysics, the re-

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[12] Richard Rorty, "Mind-Body Identity, Privacy, and Categories" in <u>Philosophy of Mind</u> ed. Stuart Hampshire (New York: Harper and Row, 1966).

[13] Charles Hartshorne, "On Some Criticisms of Whitehead's Philosophy", <u>Philosophical Review</u> 44 (1935), pp. 324-344. See pp. 324-325.

lation between framework principles, the meaning of coherence, the relation of knowing and reality. These are metacategorial issues. We have no neutral standpoint here; the argument for one unique framework depends on taking sides among frameworks.

My reply in the last paragraph may seem specious. Perhaps the proponents of the one-unique-consistent-framework are correct. If so, how can I refute them by showing that their claims depend upon disputed principles? The principles may be right; the fact that someone disagrees with them does not make them wrong. In general, disagreement does not prove that someone is wrong, but here disagreement has a special value. I am saying that arguments on these issues appeal to principles other than mere consistency, and that these principles need not be shared. I invoke disagreement to show that in fact they are not shared, hence they need not be. But the original argument claimed to have an a priori description of the nature of frameworks.

The proponent of the one-unique-framework can reply that careful argument would show the disagreement I cite is resolvable while the other frameworks are wrong. My reply would be to consider such arguments in detail. I would try to show that they appeal to principles that need not be shared, and that whenever he cites a necessary conception of some relation, there are in fact other conceptions available. The existence of the others proves that the suggested one is not a priori necessary. Some additional premise

is needed to assert it as the nature of metaphysical thinking. It seems, then, that no appeal to consistency will furnish an argument against pluralism unless it is bolstered by other principles which are framework-dependent. As in all the various strategies considered in this chapter, the problem with anti-pluralistic arguments is to account for the necessity of the conclusions.

A rationalist discussion of 'the' nature of metaphysics presumes framework-dependent principles.

I have been discussing various weapons which philosophers believe can be used to destroy the pluralism of frameworks. Although in each case the arguments and techniques may help us to find our way around in the forest of frameworks, there is no way to reduce the forest to a single tree. I will now consider another strategy. It may seem that we can take the plurality of frameworks and classify them into a finite number of types. We would then know the options on various issues. Once we have the options set out we can say that they complement each other, or we can try and decide among them.

Such a process has immense heuristic value. All philosophers engage in it, and I have no intention of trying to deny its importance, but like the earlier strategies, it furnishes at best a way of living with pluralism. To turn a heuristic organization of options into an anti-pluralism argument, we would first need some a priori principle that guaranteed the closure of our list. Since we live in his-

tory, and there are unconceived frameworks which have not been put forth, we can not arrive at a necessary classification by surveying past frameworks. And here, I would make the historical claim that philosophy shows a continual novelty, not an eternal recurrence of the same. It is true that certain sets of options do occur again and again. But they do so in different contexts and in the attempt to answer new questions. In the history of philosophy we have the rebirth of options and programs, but not fixed cycles that repeat identically. The very inconclusiveness of all philosophical revolutions is important evidence here. Yet even if the past history of philosophy showed astounding regularity, that would not be a guarantee for the future. It would not furnish an in principle exclusion of novelty. Thus no survey of past frameworks can support a necessary characterization of all possible frameworks. If we then cannot arrive at a necessary classification by surveying past frameworks, we need some a priori knowledge of what kinds of frameworks are possible. This necessary knowledge substitutes for a survey of all possible frameworks, which we cannot perform. Only then can we speak of the options.

Such classification causes no difficulty as long as it is presented as a revisable historical generalization. When we try to give it necessity, we run into difficulties. The easiest way to seek necessity is to link it to a conception of the nature of reality and of knowledge in general. But these are framework-dependent concepts. Thus how can we

tell whether a purported framework that disobeys our classification is a counter-example or has been refuted? We cannot close our classification scheme without knowing the nature of frameworks.

This is a delicate matter. I cannot argue that we have no a priori knowledge about the nature of frameworks and the set of possible frameworks. The very statement as well as this whole thesis-argument claims such knowledge. Yet, I deny that we can base such knowledge about frameworks on necessary knowledge about "reality in general", "knowledge in general". Rationalism in its many forms attempts to do so, but this argues in a circle since such concepts receive their content from frameworks.

How then do I justify my own necessary statements about frameworks? I will argue this in the next chapter, but the basic point is straightforward. The statements derive from an interpretation and description of the task of framework reconstruction. They are necessary statements in the way that statements about the rules of chess or "what we do when we give orders" are necessary. The statements convey information because they can be answers to questions like "What would I do if I took up framework reconstruction?" and "What are we doing when we work with frameworks?"

Since framework reconstruction, unlike the game of chess, does not proceed by explicitly formulated rules, my statements are corrigible interpretations of an activity we do. They are akin to analyzing a local framework, not to constructing a metaphysics; they are to be judged and correc-

ted by more careful analysis and description of the activity not by reference to some accepted total framework.

We can compare this with the rationalist approach by considering an argument of Charles Hartshorne's. In discussing determinism, he remarks:

> It is not an empirical theory. Rather it is an assertion of what every empirical theory ought to have in common with every other. It is thus an elucidation of the very concept of natural law, or of causality as such.[14]

> Here we do know what the theoretical alternative is, namely creativity or no creativity, either enrichment of the definiteness of reality or no enrichment. We know what the question is, and, if I am not mistaken, we know the answer. In this knowledge our animality is left behind.[15]

There are two issues here. The first concerns Hartshorne's contention that we know what the question is. Hartshorne feels he has captured the options because there are only so many ways to relate concepts like "event", "determination", "sequence", "regularity", "reality". This may be true, but suppose we do not use these concepts? Suppose we have a holistic view, or a view that cuts up nature in different ways, or one that refuses to use concepts on the level of abstraction Hartshorne demands? Any marshalling of <u>the</u> options depends on knowing <u>the</u> questions and <u>the</u> concepts involved. Both his view of frameworks

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[14] Charles Hartshorne, "Can Man Transcend His Aminality?", <u>The Monist</u> 55 (1971), pp. 208-217. See p. 212.

[15] <u>Ibid.</u>, pp. 214-215.

and his judgements among them depend on a priori knowledge about concepts like "reality in general". There always remains the possibility of frameworks which do not use those concepts nor ask those questions, and achieve their goals some other way. Their mere possibility destroys the necessity of Hartshorne's conclusion. Still, if one could not produce such an alternative framework, one might have to accept Hartshorne's table of options, although without attributing to it the necessity Hartshorne himself does. This is an important point: while the mere possibility of another alternative does destroy the necessity of Hartshorne's conclusions, it does not destroy the conclusions. Although they cease to be necessary, they may still be "the best yet", or "the best I have seen". This chapter is a long polemic against attempts to identify "the best I have seen" with "The best, period". The quest for certainty demands the latter, which cannot be obtained. But if we have the former, none of the arguments in this chapter say we have to give up.

My second issue with Hartshorne concerns his decision among the options. He wants to argue that absolute indeterminism is absurd.

> . . . mere or absolute indeterminism does not make sense. "No matter what has happened up to now, anything may happen next with equal probability" — these words can be uttered, but no animal can act in accordance with what they seem to say. Just to live is to face the future in terms of the past. A sheer lack of causal connectedness is pragmatically unrealizable. We are going, to some extent, to

> predict the future and regard it in some degree as already determined.[16]

What is interesting about this argument is the switch from the rationalistic "does not make sense" to the pragmatic "no animal can act . . . " This pragmatic need is surely real; Hume cites it too, but argues to a different conclusion. Hartshorne here compares a possible framework principle (complete indeterminism) with a condition for our action in the world. He feels the argument provides certainty, when all it really yields is a good reason to accept his conclusion (provided you also accept the tacit premisses about the relation of knowledge and action and metaphysics).

Arguing against complete determinism, Hartshorne says

> For determinism, what happens is always in truth the sole possibility; but "sole possibility" is the same as "necessity". And so two distinct modal categories are collapsed into one. (I may seem to be forgetting about "other possible worlds". But I am not forgetting. If real alternatives within nature are rejected, the concept of possibility becomes an illicit appeal to the supernatural). It is not observation that protests against this, but logical analysis. Spinoza showed on a grand scale the paradoxes which result from identifying possibility and necessity. For one thing, not only does the possible collapse into the necessary, but both are the same as the actual. It is not hard to show that with the collapse of conceptual distinctions all other basic polarities become problematic or contradictory.[17]

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[16] Ibid., p. 212.

[17] Ibid., pp. 212-213.

To this argument the determinist would reply, "So what? If all other basic polarities are going to collapse and leave us with Spinozistic 'paradoxes' (surely not literal paradoxes), then so be it. This only shows how wrong our ordinary framework is. Let us construct a non-polar framework". Against an opponent who is willing to surrender all that Hartshorne says he must in order to hold determinism, this general argument cannot be conclusive. In both these arguments Hartshorne has claimed to achieve certainty. In fact he has shown the conclusions he attacks are untenable relative to other claims, analyses, and principles he will not give up and tries to support elsewhere. I am not suggesting that Hartshorne has argued badly, only that he misdescribes what he does. What he said he would achieve (the question and its answer) is impossible. What he has actually achieved is typical of good arguments about frameworks.

Dialectical methods of moving from the plurality to the One Framework cannot achieve the necessity required to remove pluralism.

Continuing the discussion of arguments which begin with a preliminary acceptance of pluralism, I would like to consider a number of ways in which some reflective process, loosely called "dialectic", might be used to establish The One Framework. The same methods can be used in the attempt to move from local principles to a total framework. My general critique of all such methods will be that they lack

necessity and thus only serve to augment the plurality of frameworks with some highly sophisticated members.

The word "dialectic" borrows as much from Plato as from Hegel. In the Republic Plato uses the term to name the method of thinking and discourse which is to be anonymous and impersonally persuasive, open to all, starting from hypotheses and working up to the Forms. Hegel's dialectic is one attempt to produce a method which fills Plato's criteria.

We might begin by grouping frameworks as alternative answers to a given question, and using the groupings to construct aporia in the Aristotelian or Platonic manner. Such groupings of competing inadequate frameworks would invite us to move to "a higher level" by some sort of innovation. We might make the move by denying some common presupposition of the assembled framework, or by introducing a distinction, finding a more general principle or a new way of relating concepts. This Aristotelian mode of procedure is an important part of philosophical argument, as this present chapter is such an exercise. It may indeed result in a new framework which has many advantages over the older ones. As a method of discovery it has much to recommend it. But if it is to be more than a tool, if it is to remove pluralism, it has to show some necessary move from the many inadequate to the one adequate framework. Unless the particular innovation used in the move to a new level is itself necessary, the innovation remains one from a field of possible innovations, and the problem of pluralism

repeats itself on the new level. But to make the move necessary would require commitments in epistemology or ontology which are themselves matters of framework principles.

These considerations suggest that the most effective "dialectical" way would be for the philosopher not to make any innovations at all. He simply lets the inadequacies of the various frameworks interact with one another and "the content itself" builds The One Framework.

This approach is usually associated with Hegel if he is interpreted as a metaphysician. Without getting into the morasses of Hegel-interpretation, we can at least assert that he can be interpreted to be doing something like this in his History of Philosophy. Other parts of his system could be seen as a similar immanent movement, from local principles to a total view. The key to his process is the principles of determinate negation. It is this which is supposed to make the transitions among frameworks necessary, arising not from the will of the philosophers but from the content itself.

We usually picture ourselves denying some principles, then hanging in an indeterminate state while we search to replace them. Hegel claims this picture is misleading. To deny principle A is to affirm principle B. There is no indeterminate state from which we could move various directions. It is not that the denial of Parmenides leads to Heraclitus. The denial of Parmenides is the assertion of Heraclitus. Of course the later philosopher's denial of Parmenides will not make him Heraclitean. This is be-

cause the process has advanced; the later philosopher is no longer denying only Parmenides. As the dialectic moves, it recapitulates itself so that I can and do deny Parmenides, but from a different level and in a different context. It is that context and level which bring about determinate negation for me.

There is clearly something to the principle of determinate negation. As a tool of historical analysis it does uncover patterns that relate different thinkers and periods. But is it useful for disposing of pluralism? Now it is true, for instance, that Descartes-Spinoza-Leibniz-Malebranche-Locke-Hume run through a set of alternative positions on the nature of substance, individuality, and interaction. Given Descartes' definition of substance, both plurality and interaction becomes questionable. The philosophers mentioned do present the basic known ways of dealing with these problems. As a result, in the context of Descartes' definition, to deny Spinoza may well be to affirm Leibniz. It is Descartes' definition which raises the problem and creates the logical space of possible solutions. Determinate negation works becausethere is a context which structures logical space so that not-A does equal B. Without such a context not-A would be indefinite. Without that antecedent commitment, the denial of Spinoza does not lead to any definite alternative. It is also necessary that the options structured by the antecedent commitment be closed, so that their relations to each other can be settled. (It is not clear that the Descartes example really supplies such

a closed set of options. History shows no closed sets of options for the broadest issues, but within a restricted area with enough antecedent commitments there might well be such closed sets).

Further, the Hegelian must be ready to show that when the underlying principle which structures the options is itself rejected, there is yet a larger context-creating principle which makes that denial equal to a new affirmation. And so on to the next level, and the next.

Whether determinate negation is possible reduces to the questions whether there is a necessary context for all frameworks, or perhaps a hierarchy of contexts structuring the lesser and greater transitions, and whether there are frameworks which are related externally to the dialectical process. If there were any frameworks which, so to speak, stood beside the dialectic and observed it from the outside, then the context-creators within the dialectic would not have the required universality.

In the second chapter I asserted that there is a common context for all frameworks. The Hegelian assertion is similar, but far stronger. It demands a context which structures the logical space of alternatives so that on every level to deny A is to affirm B. Ultimately that context can only be the structure of Spirit itself.

We have to look more closely at the requirement of closure. For determinate negation to eventuate in the One Framework, the series of stages it produces must be closed. If it could bring forth only an endless series of internally related frameworks, the context-creating principles would not

have been strong enough to get determinate negation going in the first place. For Hegel, closure involves a self-reflection on the context which generates the determinate negation. The series does not go on forever because one member finally catches up the context into presence, and is therefore the last. If we interpret Hegel's Logic as an atemporal presentation of possible frameworks related by determinate negation, we can see that the closure of the series is achieved because the last Framework (the Absolute Idea) is a self-reflection on the process of its own creation.

For this self-reflection on the process of its own creation to succeed, the subject (reader, observer) must not be allowed to remain outside. If I remain outside the completed series I can transcend the final stage, take a point of view on it, and put it into a new context. New questions, new demands, new frameworks could then arise which are externally related to the dialectic, and not dealt with in the series. This is what I think does happen. Hegel attempts to avoid it by a preparatory exercise which mediates the subject into the process so that we cannot stand outside it.

The question whether dialectic can be used to eliminate pluralism reduces to two issues. First: Can a series of frameworks be constructed which somehow includes all important possibilities, leaves none externally related to itself, and shows them all to be related by determinate negation in a way that leads to some closure? (Can something like

Hegel's Logic be made to work?) And second: Can there be some sort of antecedent purification and mediation of the "observer" into the process so that he is no longer outside but is caught up in the dialectic and therefore part of the final self-reflection? (Can something like Hegel's Phenomenology be made to work?) In the end the second is the more important question because it is the purification of the subject that gives the Logic a place to start as well as a way to closure.

This discussion of the requirements for a Hegelian approach shows why less full-bodied "dialectics" will fail to eliminate pluralism. They involve relationships which we see, which we look at, and which, therefore, we can transcend and place in new contexts. They cannot achieve necessity or closure because they remain processes we observe. The Hegelian project depends crucially on whatever mediation is used to catch the subjectivity of the observer into the dialectic process. In other words, we ask, can Hegel's Phenomenology succeed? At this point I can only register my belief that it cannot. To show this in detail for the transitions in the Phenomenology itself would be beyond the present study and, indeed, beyond my ability. I would use the same basic arguments as in the last few pages —— considerations of starting-point, context, necessity, and closure. In the next chapter I want to argue against a full self-transparency of subjectivity, which is a vital part of Hegel's program.

A Hegelian way of summarizing what I have been saying is that if you distrust immediacy and wish to have a process

which will produce a necessary result by mediation, the process itself must have a guarantee of necessity. But the guarantee cannot itself be something immediate. Neither can it be a mediated result, or you have a vicious regress. So you must have a necessary self-mediation from immediacy. It is just this that I am saying is impossible. There is no privileged self-reflection. There is only framework dependent thought.

<u>There are several ways to use transcendental arguments against pluralism, but they all beg the question</u>.

I will now consider several ways of using transcendental arguments to do away with pluralism. These combine features and flaws of both the rationalist and the dialectical attacks on pluralism.

The various metaphysical ways of talking about the world all presuppose that there is a world to talk about. An analysis of the conditions (the <u>a priori</u> forms of intuition, the categories of understanding) that make possible human experience and knowledge of the world is done by a method called 'transcendental'. An argument for certain conditions necessary for experience and knowledge is called a transcendental argument. Like an empirical argument, it starts with a fact of experience, but instead of using it as evidence, the transcendental argument asks what must be true if this fact is accepted. In such a way it is believed that we can arrive at a conclusion which retains a connection with experience (because it explains the possibility of experience) but is itself not contingent in the way empirical conclusions are.

In what follows I use a description of transcendental proofs which is taken from the last sections of Kant's Critique of Pure Reason; it is a notion introduced in the discussion of the Analytic of Principles and in the Methodology, although Kant does work with it throughout the Critique. Since frameworks are sets of propositions we may say that a transcendental argument seeks to establish a synthetic a priori proposition. In Kant's terms, a transcendental argument provides a "third thing" which links the subject and predicate of a non-analytic but still necessary proposition. It does so by referring them to the possibility of experience or discourse.

> Such proof does not show that the given concept (for instance, of that which happens) leads directly to another concept (that of a cause); for such a transition would be a saltus which could not be justified. The proof proceeds by showing that experience itself, and therefore the object of experience, would be impossible without a connection of this kind.[18]

A transcendental argument thus involves a relation between the subject (S) and predicate (P) of a proposition, and the possibility of experience or of objects of experience (X). The proof proceeds by showing that (X) is not possible unless "(S) is (P)" is a necessary proposition.

I will criticize the use of transcendental arguments in framework matters by pointing out difficulties in giving adequate content to the concepts (S) and (X). Speaking of the concept (S), Kant says

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[18] Immanuel Kant, Critique of Pure Reason tran. Norman Kemp Smith (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1968). See p. 621; A783-B811.

> . . . we start always from <u>one</u> concept only, and assert the synthetic condition of the possibility of the object in accordance with this concept. Since outside this concept there is nothing further through which the object could be determined, there can therefore be only one ground of proof. The proof can contain nothing more than the determination of an object in general in accordance with this one single concept.[19]

As Kant points out, since (S) determines the object, it must be unambiguous, or the proof never gets started. Similarly, since (X) is the touchstone by which we unit (S) and (P), we cannot have different notions of what "experience" of the "objects of experience" are, since this would lead to different transcendental conditions. If we try to use transcendental arguments to do away with framework pluralism, we fall into both these errors.

Consider first the attempt to find transcendental condition for some limited area of experience. Such conditions, would be local frameworks. As we have seen before, we need a description that presents an area of experience as the area for which we seek conditions. Thus, I need a description of science, or of moral experience, that allows me to say "Such and such principles are necessary for the possibility of science (or of morality)". If we start with different descriptions of what science is, our concept (X) will differ, and our results will not agree. Even if we do agree on this basic level, I could still disagree with your extension of the conditions of science to religion and art as well. Neither working in local areas nor using them as keys for

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[19] <u>Ibid</u>., p. 624; A788-B816.

a whole framework allows a transcendental argument to overcome pluralism.

Since this is the case, perhaps we can establish The One Framework by finding transcendental conditions for all data. In this case, our (X) will be "objects in general", which seems to avoid the problems with describing local areas. But the concept (X) still has too many possible contents. If we try to find conditions for all framework data, we must first agree on how to describe the data, and the decision how to present and describe it will influence the results. If you think religious experience is a prime datum and I think it only a case to be dealt with by psychology, you will reject any transcendental argument I give for my framework because you think I have prejudiced my description of "objects in general" by ruling out an important area. The root of this difficulty is that there is no neutral, unprejudiced content to the concepts "object", "experience", "discourse", once we cut them free from specific local principles. We can find some clear content to "objects of quantum mechanics", or "moral discourse". But "objects in general" or "discourse as such" acquires content only through frameworks. We have neither intellectual intuition of necessary connections nor any universal ordinary language to analyze which uses these concepts on the framework level of generality and necessity. Hence, if we expect to establish a framework as the condition of using these concepts, we inevitably argue in a circle. Are the objects of religious experience part of "objects in general" or not? This question has to be answered before we can use

"objects in general" as (X) in a transcendental argument aimed at frameworks. But this question is one of those we want our argument to answer. Without an answer, there is no way to decide whether religious objects disprove our results, or vice versa.

And yet Kant makes an attempt to work from "object of a cognitive faculty" as his (X), without any framework presuppositions. In a letter to Christian Garve, he writes:

> Absolutely no other science attempts this, that is, to develop a priori out of the mere concept of a cognitive faculty (when that concept is precisely defined) all the objects, everything that can be known of them, yes, even what one is involuntarily constrained to believe about them.[20]

It does seem, however, that Kant's transcendental psychology and reliance on science as his paradigm mode of experience do define "objects in general" in a non-neutral way. Or, in the context of the whole Critical Philosophy, they should be taken as defining only one area of objects (as opposed to objects of morality, aesthetics, etc.).

Since we cannot use transcendental arguments to vindicate one framework at the expense of all others, we might seek to establish conditions of the possibility of all acceptable frameworks. Framework candidates could then be judged on how they embody the general conditions. For example, we might conclude that all frameworks must account for some sort of unity through time if they are to define objects of knowledge at all. Newtonian causality, or Whiteheadean prehensions and objective immortality, or Aristotelian act-

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[20] Immanuel Kant, Philosophical Correspondence: 1759-1799 ed. and tran. Arnulf Zweig (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967) p. 102.

potency and the four causes, all would be acceptable frameworks under this condition. Indeterminism or a pure datum theory would not be acceptable. We might then argue that all frameworks must fit Plato's demand in the Philebus that all thinkable objects be both one and many.[21] This might lead us to argue for Whitehead and against classical theism, or for materialism against the Hindu indeterminate pure consciousness.

The point I want to make against this method is simple but easily confused. I want to accept principles like those mentioned, but deny they can be transcendentally established. In the next chapter I want to explore a more adequate basis for such principles; I will confine my argument here to denying their transcendental necessity.

The method of transcendental necessity cannot give content to its concept (S). I will now offer three descriptions of what (S) might be, and show that from none of them can we construct a transcendental arguments.

(i) We might say (S) is "any acceptable framework". But this demands a prior agreement about which frameworks

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[21] Plato wanted to explain the shadows on the cave wall. Any object of experience, a table for example, required explanation. The universal was arrived at through the particular; we are able to come to know the tableness because we see tables. Thus we can conceive of things as both one (in the universal) and many (in the particulars). Plato demanded that all thinkable objects must be both one and many. We are to apply a dialectical treatment to the apparent paradox that " . . . all things are said to consist of a one and a many", (Philebus, 16D) and so we are to see how each generic unity contains within itself a definite number of 'kinds' mediating between itself and the infinity of particulars into which it ultimately vanishes. This is the so called 'Philebus Principles of the One and Many'; it is to be of value as generalization and analysis for scientific procedures.

See pp. 18-24, sec. 14B - 18D in Plato's Examination of Pleasure, a translation of the 'Philebus' with introduction and commentary by R. Hackforth (Cambridge University Press, 1958).

are acceptable. That settles the question in advance, and we do not need the transcendental argument. If I argue from my set of acceptable frameworks to certain transcendental conditions, I cannot without begging the question use my results to discredit other frameworks you think acceptable.

(ii) We can try to avoid the problems with (i) by broadening our basis of argument. Here, (S) will be "any possible framework" and we can hope to use the results to distinguish real frompseudo-frameworks. But the structure of this argument is identical with that of (i). If your conditions say that my framework is not really possible, do you refute me, or have I provided a counterexample to your conditions? There is no transcendental way to settle the issue whether you should have included my framework in the basis of your argument from the beginning yet that is the issue we are trying to resolve by the transcendental argument.

(iii) The first two attempts show us that we cannot make headway if we seek the conditions of frameworks themselves. There are too many different versions of what it is we want transcendental conditions for. Deciding among those versions is just what the game is about. So, we might try seeking transcendental conditions for the objects of any possible framework categories and principles. Several plausible conditions were mentioned above as examples. Can they or conditions like them be established transcendentally?

We begin with our new (S), "object of any framework categories and principles". This is more familiar as the concept of "being" or "entity as such". Here its content is to be specified not by one but by any possible framework. We therefore run into the same problem we had earlier with "object in general". The concept has a plausible look; we can generalize from frameworks we know. We can think of characteristics necessary to objects of Aristotelian and Whiteheadean frameworks, or of Aristotelian and Spinozistic ones. All we have to do is carry this process out to include any possible framework. But we cannot do this. As pointed out earlier, there are unconceived frameworks and we do not have a normative description that lets us know in advance what kinds of framework are possible. Since we do not have intellectual intuition of necessary connections and conditions, no such normative description could be established without circular appeal to just the sort of argument we are now considering. We cannot decide whether a discordant item has been refuted or is a counterexample. As a result, we do not have the unambiguous determination of "objects" needed to get the transcendental proof going. Or, if we do start, we are not working with a neutral concept (S) and pluralism remains.

The transcendental argument cannot get off the ground without content for (S). We cannot guarantee any content for (S) without appeal to a transcendental argument. We could appeal to some other form of <u>a priori</u> knowledge about possible objects and possible frameworks but then we would not need any transcendental argument.

I have been considering ways in which transcendental arguments fail to deal with framework pluralism. Körner has raised the stronger objection that they fail in all contexts. He claims that no such argument can give a uniqueness proof for its results. Implicit in the quotes from Kant cited earlier is the claim that only one set of conditions makes experience possible. Körner claims that there is no way to show that any set of conditions is the only one, and he claims to have actual counterexamples to Kant's conclusion.[22] I am in sympathy with this stronger conclusion (it is another way of saying that there is no neutral characterization of "objects in general" or "experience as such"), but for the present discussion it suffices that no transcendental argument about metaphysical frameworks succeeds. Such arguments presuppose a covert survey or a priori knowledge of all possible conditions. If this were not already presupposed, the argument could not claim to have the only conditions that make experience (or frameworks) possible. Since the survey is impossible and the presupposed knowledge circular, pluralism of conditions is not excluded.

Arguments such as Strawson's for the primacy of "the framework of ordinary language" confuse local and total principles, and interpretation.

In the last sections of this chapter I would like to consider ordinary language arguments against pluralism, first in general, then in the Strawsonian form which involves transcendental arguments.

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[22] Stephen Körner, "The Impossibility of Transcendental Deduction", The Monist 51 (1967), pp. 317-331.

The "alternative program" discussed in Chapter Three is the purest ordinary language position. The latter Wittgenstein does not argue for an "ordinary language framework"; he condemns the whole framework enterprise. Other views try to adopt a middle course by championing the primacy of an ordinary framework. Because they have already come halfway by admitting frameworks at all, their positions tend to be unstable.

It is often assumed in ordinary language circles that metaphysical frameworks arise either from misunderstandings of language, or from a mixed-up language, or from the collision of language areas. If it could be proven that ordinary language avoids these problems, there would be no purpose in constructing new frameworks. This claim can be made in two ways. It is one thing to say with Wittgenstein that we are misguided to try and interpret ordinary language at all, because it stands all right without a framework. It is different to argue that new frameworks should not be constructed because the ordinary language framework is all right as it stands. The second approach assumes that ordinary discourse <u>has</u> a framework which can be challenged and defended.

In particular, J. L. Austin conceives the central task of philosophy as the careful elucidation of the forms and concepts of ordinary language (as opposed to the language of philosophers, not to that of poets or scientists or metaphysicians). He claims that it is "only common prudence" for anyone embarking on any kind of philosophical investigation, even one that might eventually involve the creation

of a special technical vocabulary, to begin with an examination of the resources of the terminology already at their disposal. The clarification of ordinary language is thus the "begin-all" of any philosophical investigation. However, Austin does not think that ordinary language is sacrosant; but he certainly thinks it unlikely that hopelessly muddled uses of language can survive very long and feels that they are more likely to occur in rather specialized and infrequently used areas of our vocabulary. In general, then, he maintains that the conceptual scheme of ordinary language is adequate, and that we have no need of another. This is why the revisionary metaphysician is someone "with whom we do not wish to quarrel, but whom we do not need to follow". And so Austin states his aphorism that "ordinary language is the first word", and his claim that "our common stock of words" will prove more sound and subtle "than any that you or I are likely to think up in our armchairs of an afternoon."[23]

The "first word" is crucial datum for framework-interpretation. But Austin's claim was that such interpretation is not needed; if we could lay it out in detail, we would see that the ordinary language framework serve our goals with far more adequacy and subtlety than anything we might construct. If we understood ordinary language fully, we would not feel the need for odd frameworks. This claim is often verified: ordinary language talk about time is far more nuanced and insightful than the regimented versions metaphysicians have produced. But the claim is often erron-

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[23] J. L. Austin, "A Plea for Excuses", Philosophical Papers ed. J. O. Urmson and G. J. Warnock (Oxford University Press, 1970), pp. 175-204; see p. 185.

eous: ordinary language talk about science and scientific entities is usually far from "all right". Ordinary language is all right where it stands — but there are other areas frameworks must deal with, and an ordinary language framework totters when it is simply transposed to those areas.

A switch in the meaning of "ordinary language" happens somewhere between the late Wittgenstein and Strawson. For Wittgenstein, "ordinary language" is a type of language: that which arises out of the practice of a shared form of life. The various language-games that comprise this type form a motley; they have no unified categorial structure. The resulting diversity causes no difficulty because it is treated according to the "alternative program" discussed in Chapter Three. For Strawson, on the other hand, "ordinary language" is a specific language with a detailed categorial structure. It is opposed to other specific languages, such as those of sense datum theory or Leibnizian metaphysics. These collide with one another; Strawson sets out to prove the primacy of the ordinary categories. For Wittgenstein such a problem could never arise.

In this study I have accepted the Wittgensteinian notion that ordinary language is a type, a motley, and has no overall framework. Where I differ from him is in claiming that such languages can be interpreted in a framework, for purposes which legitimate the practice of framework-reconstruction. I am now arguing against the idea of "<u>the</u> ordinary language framework." Austin's claim that ordinary language is <u>de facto</u> correct opens the door to many challenges, which Strawson tries to meet. He claims other frame-

works may be constructed, but they are either incoherent with or parasitic upon the ordinary framework, whose necessary primacy is shown by a variety of transcendental arguments.

My opinion is that the necessity of Strawson's results, where genuine, has to be separated from the framework he constructs. He provides us with analyses of necessary connections, for instance, the dependence of identification of particulars on the framework of material bodies. He also provides us with a metaphysics which incorporates these results as framework principles. I want to argue that the unshakable result (presuming it so) is not a framework, and that the framework is quite shakable. To put the matter in his terms, Strawson cannot maintain the claim that his descriptive metaphysics is only the analysis of concepts carried out on a larger scale.

I am concerned with the structure of Strawson's argument, so I will presume that his analyses of ordinary language are sound. Even if they are not, an argument of the same structure could still be attempted with better analyses, and it is this style of argument that I think invalid.

Strawson provides us with connections among concepts, and relations among types of particulars. Presuming this an accurate description of ordinary language, the results cannot be ignored or denied, but they can be interpreted. In this they are no different than the Cartesian distinction of conception and imagination, or the point mentioned earlier that self-consciousness is not divisible as are material objects. Descartes goes on to argue from these to dualism,

but his argument depends on principles besides the conceptual clarification itself. So too for Strawson's analyses; though he can make them into a framework, his framework is no closer to them than is a Leibnizian framework which interprets them in the light of a different ontology. Leibniz refuses Strawson's principle that ontological dependence is in the same order as dependence in identification. Similarly a Hegelian or an extreme atomist could deal with Strawson's analyses in their own ways. My point is that in no case need his findings be denied, but only interpreted differently. Under the guise of extended analysis, Strawson provides both analysis and interpretation.

I want to show, then, that Strawson's framework is an interpretation and not a simple transcription of the analyses he has performed. Consider the category of "person". Strawson claims that his category of persons is fundamental to all discussion of an reference to the self. He argues from the conditions for identifying an "owner of experience", the individual, capable of receiving two types of predicates.

Strawson begins with the observation that we are able to get about in the world because we can identify and reidentify material objects; such things or 'particulars' are basic to our conceptual scheme of identification. The idea of ourselves, however, is distinct from that of a material object; there is a contrast between persons and things. If our ideas were only of what we experience, and if we experience only material bodies, then we could never derive the idea of that which <u>has</u> these ideas. But since we do have these ideas, we are not simply material bodies. In

order to be able to make the distinction between objective particulars and our experiences of them, and so be able to ascribe experience as states of consciousness to ourselves and to others, Strawson argues that we must presuppose as logically primitive the concept of a person. There is, then, a special primacy for "persons". For unless we employ this concept as primitive we are not able to identify subjects for the ascription of experiences. Persons are a subclass of material objects, for Strawson, and the ability of the category of persons to provide suitably individuated subjects for ascribing conscious states to depends on the identifiability of material bodies.

To help argue for the distinction between persons and things Strawson suggests that many of the terms which are correctly applicable to material bodies are also, and according to the same criteria, correctly applicable to ourselves as persons. These are called "M-predicates: and they include things like 'weighs 10 stone', 'is in the drawing-room' and so on."[24] There is then a second class of terms, all the other predicates we apply to persons. These are called "P-predicates" and they include things like 'is smiling', 'is going for a walk', as well as things like 'is in pain', 'is thinking hard', 'believes in God' and so on. Strawson argues that the complex concept of "person" is not build up from more primitive simpler concepts such as "a consciousness" or "a human body", but rather these simpler concepts are abstracted from the logically primitive concept of a person.

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[24] P. F. Strawson, Individuals: An Essay in Descriptive Metaphysics (London: University Paperbacks, Methuen, 1977). See p. 104.

Strawson maintains a relation of dependence in identification: the category of material body has a specific primacy, an "ontological priority", over that of persons.[25] But is it necessary that the concept of the self be parasitic upon the Strawsonian notion of a person? I suggest not; I will show that Strawson's analysis of the conditions of the concept "owner of experience" can be accepted without prejudice to other analyses starting from different concepts. Whitehead, for instance, argues that experience needs no owner; that is, there may be concepts of the self which do not rely on a thing-ontology. Strawson's conclusion from his analysis is not the only possible interpretation.

Once again, this is his argument:

(a) The "owner of experience" can only be identified by reference to bodies and should be conceptualized as a Strawsonian "person".

(b) All other concepts of the self or of consciousness cannot be directly used in identifying references.

Therefore:

(c) The proper way to categorize the self is as a "person".

Granted the two premisses, the conclusion demands a further premise linking proper categorization and criteria in identification. Strawson provides such a premise with a trans-categorial principle: namely the ontological priority explained above, a dependence of one being on another in the same order of dependence as that for identification and reference. And this comes from the correct idea that a frame-

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[25] Ibid., pp. 59 and 126.

work cannot arbitrarily disrupt the necessary relations among concepts on some level of discourse. But it remains possible that the entire level of persons, the identification activity of M-predicates and P-predicates, could itself be interpreted in an alternative way, perhaps as a level containing Leibnizian monads. The necessary relations Strawson indicates need only be accepted as data, not as framework principles. Since the second premise does not have to be granted, Strawson's argument fails to have the necessity he desires.

There is a further point about this argument. Premise (b) contains an appeal to a survey of all possible modes of conceptualizing the self. This is the problem with transcendental arguments I argued earlier. In this case we can weaken the premise and say "all other known concepts of the self or of consciousness cannot be directly used in identifying reference".

Even the weakened form of premise (b), is suspect. If we change our concept of a particular, might we not find other ways of referring? For example, let us consider the alternative that Leibniz constructs. The Leibnizian metaphysical unit is the "monad"; it has an autonomous life, it is unextended, active, indivisible; it is a teleological substance ideally related in a system of pre-established harmony. Monads are the entities that provide the conditions that make possible the world as we experience it; as such, they are basis for understanding and knowledge. Now God can refer to them without referring to phenomena; God can

thus refer to these as primary particulars, and this stems from the feature that in Leibniz's metaphysics these monads are serviceable explanatory entities. In Strawson's interpretation of Leibniz, monads are to replace both material bodies and persons as the primary particulars; monads are the only legitimate logical objects. But only God can make independent identifying references to monads; only by God's "complete concepts" (the recognition of the total structure of a monad, out of space and time) can monads be directly referred to. But to explain the world as we experience it, not as it is known to God, we do not need to share God's knowledge, according to Leibniz. Let me explain, then, how Leibniz's definition of an "individual" in terms of its "complete notion" and his argument against indiscernibles furnishes an alternate account of individuation and reference.

Strawson realizes this, and attacks Leibniz in the "Monads" chapter of Individuals.[26]

> The individuals of the system are particulars. But they are particulars who can only by the grace of God be, even theoretically, identifyingly referred to. For even if it is true that there is a uniquely applicable description for every individual, or, in other words, that no two particular consciousnesses have the same point of view, that it is true is not a matter of logical necessity, but of the free choice of a God who does not care for reduplication without difference. And, since demonstrative expressions can have no application to the real world of non-spatial, non-temporal monads, even the theoretical possibility of identifying references rests upon this prior theological assurance.[27]

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[26] Ibid., pp. 117-134.

[27] Ibid., p. 125.

> This choice, then, appears to preserve the character of the ontology of monads as an ontology of particulars, but destroys the logical integrity of the system. For it makes the possibility of individuation rest upon a theological principle.[28]

Now this view of Strawson's, I want to argue, is a serious misunderstanding of Leibniz. The "theological" aspects are what give "integrity" to the whole system; they are not ad hoc devices to name a monadic ontology. Leibniz's God is not an omniscient Book of Common Prayer Deity brought in to save a leaky system. Leibniz's project is to show that reality is totally intelligible and yet not necessary (as it is for Spinoza). Since our world is a selection from among possibilities we can evaluate it, praise God for it, and even find room for freedom despite total intelligibility. God is brought in everywhere in the system. All the key metaphysical notions depend on God for their content and exemplification. Only by changing your notion of intelligibility, that is, only by having already rejected Leibniz, can you make Strawson's distinction separating the monadic ontology from the doctrine of God. There may be problems with Leibniz's system, and difficulties with his project as a whole, but Strawson's procedure will not find them because it begs the question.

Strawson's second criticism is more telling.

> Finally — though this is the kind of criticism which may well be held to be irrelevant to such metaphysical systems — it could not possibly be the primary conceptual scheme of any non-divine monad. For, in order to be contemplated as a possible conceptual scheme, it requires at least

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[28] Ibid., p. 126.

> that the contemplator should attach sense to the idea of distinguishing individual subjects of states of consciousness. We have already discussed the conditions of the possibility of this idea, and they clearly do not allow that the primary concept of such a subject should be the concept of a Leibnizian monad.[29]

Even assuming that Strawson is correct when he says that we need to use the Strawsonian "person" - concept to make identifying references in ordinary language, this argument does not succeed. It depends on two of Strawson's principles: the transcategorial principle that 'ontological dependence of one being on another is in the same order of dependence as dependence for identification and reference', and the metacategorial principle that 'an ontology which could be taken seriously only by God is not to count as a possible ontology.[30] The transcategorial principle has already been discussed. Rejecting it means rejecting the idea that our primary conceptual scheme necessarily tells you anything about reality. Leibniz would grant with ease Strawson's contention that we cannot use "complete notions" to individuals and refer to particulars. We exist in space and time. But God uses "complete notions", and his "primary concepts" do tell us about reality. Using the above metacategorial principle, Strawson would reject this rationalist claim. Leibniz would agree that we cannot use God's concepts to refer, because we lack God's mode of knowledge. But, and this is the core of rationalism, we have a mode of knowledge analogous to God's. As I have already

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[29] Idem.

[30] Idem.

suggested, for purposes of explaining the world as we experience it, Leibniz does not have to be able to use God's language to make references; he has only to be able to describe its ontology. We have the ability to analyze the necessary relations among concepts and to perceive first principles. This enables us to know something about God's conceptual schemes, and so about reality. By doing so, in Leibniz's system, we get a guarantee of our ordinary modes of knowledge and reference to particulars. The rationalist would accept Strawson's claim but refuse his conclusion; the two positions differ in their metacategorial principles. To reject Leibniz because he does not hold Strawson's metacategorial principle ("An ontology which could be taken seriously only by God is not to count as a possible ontology.")[31] is again to beg the question. This happens even if we accept Strawson's analyses of ordinary language. We thus see that Strawson is really giving analyses and interpretations.

A second example can be gleaned from Strawson's discussion of "formal concepts". At the end of The Bounds of Sense, he proposes that:

> There are a number of concepts which we might call "formal concepts" and which share certain features at least analogous to some of the features ascribed by Kant to pure categories. They include such concepts as the following: identity, existence, class and class-membership, property, relation, individual, unity, totality.[32]

These concepts are connected by "perfectly general deductive connections belonging to formal logic." They are unusual

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[31] Idem.

[32] P. F. Strawson, The Bounds of Sense: An Essay on 'Kant's Critique of Pure Reason' (London: Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1973), p. 266.

because they are never used alone, but are always applied or exemplified in the process of using other concepts for which we must have empirical criteria. Just as Kant restricts the categories to possible experience, Strawson restricts the application of formal concepts to those objects to which other concepts can be empirically applied. Strawson's analogue to Kant's thinking the thing-in-itself (but not knowing it) is his claim that we cannot dogmatically limit where new empirical concepts will allow us to extend our formal concepts. What is interesting now are the types of extension of the formal concepts Strawson envisages.[33]

(a) The discovery of new properties of objects (analogous to our developing a new sense organ).

(b) The discovery of new objects (analogous to developing a new scientific theory).

(c) The postulation of unobservable entities (under certain conditions).

(d) "We have . . . no reason to deny a priori the possibility of different kinds of revelation of objective reality for which we have no easy analogy like that of a new sense organ or a new scientific theory. (And of course no reason to affirm it either)."

(e) ". . . perhaps we can . . . be said to extend our knowledge of the world by learning to see it afresh, to extend or modify our classifications and descriptions, in ways and directions with which natural science has little to do."

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[33] Ibid., pp. 268-270 and passim.

This is an impressive list, and it provides for a modest pluralism based on new theories and the creation of new language-games. The allowable pluralism would be held in check by the requirement that whatever is developed be in systematic connection with the ordinary language framework.

> To admit this modest conception is simply to reject the dogmatic denial of the possibility of knowledge of new types of individual, property, and relation, new applications of the concept of identity.[34]

The striking thing about this "modes conception" is that it presupposes that we have only one concept of individual, property, relation, identity, and the rest. What Strawson wants to keep open is the possibility of new applications of these concepts. This overlooks the possibility of new formations of concepts.

No doubt we can construct frameworks using Strawson's concepts and varying the list of entities involved. But the truly revolutionary and important reconstruction comes when the concepts themselves change. This happens in the history of philosophy, as well as in the existence of different systems of logic today. Strawson's use of his concepts is only one interpretation among many, and not a simple transcription of ordinary language. He is presupposing a whole list of meta- and transcategorial principles that define these concepts. What we see Strawson doing is what becomes of metaphysics when these concepts are taken for granted and the main topic of discussion becomes the contents of the lists of entities they are to be applied to.

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[34] Ibid., p. 268.

From the time of the positivists and of Moore's reaction to MacTaggart, the analytic tradition has tended to see metaphysical frameworks as matters of addition and subtraction of classes of entities. This is clear from the way problems are often phrased in terms of whether we should add or subtract entities from the ordinary list of "real beings". First we deny some ordinary entities, say material objects, then we try to construct a framework that gets along without them and still does what ordinary language does. Or we first add new entities, say subsistent propositions, and try to construct a framework using the richer resources.

This view of frameworks tends to exclude a great deal of what has been traditionally called metaphysics, and it impoverishes the function of reflective frameworks. Most of the important variations on the one-many problem are washed out, as are considerations of alternative transcategorial principles. Discussion focuses exclusively on categorial principles, and metaphysics becomes the study of ontic commitment.

And so there is more to metaphysics than lists. For example, Whitehead's metaphysics is best seen as a change of concepts and principles about individuality, relation, unity and multiplicity. It is misinterpreted if it is seen only as a wholesale exchange of one list of entities for another odder list. Whitehead does not set out to explain mathematics, religion, and art by using a new list of basic individuals, but by using a new concept of what individuality is. It is this creation of new concepts and

principles that makes frameworks illuminating. They can lead us to see the familiar in new lights as the results of new conditions and modes of unity. If the notion of individuality remains unchanged, it is relatively unilluminating to know that the repertory of individuals can be expanded or contracted, just as it is relatively unimportant for Newton's theory how many planets there are. This must be decided, but it is not the most vital question.

Strawson claims that his particular formal concepts have the backing of ordinary language. I have already argued that ordinary language in the Wittgensteinian sense has no overall framework; its conditions and presuppositions are more humdrum and practical. Even presuming Strawson could show that the Oxford bus driver uses a framework made up of Strawsonian formal concepts, all that would be shown is the actual use of a framework. Any necessity would have to be obtained by a transcendental argument, and this cannot be done.

Strawson's rejoinder would be that only these concepts make coherent experience possible. My reply to this claim involves a distinction. I have already granted that there may be local frameworks which are necessary for coherent discourse of certain types. Recall the example of "George is an individual" mentioned at the beginning of Chapter Three. If this is what Strawson means, I agree with him. But then he has no right to attack Leibniz. As I showed earlier, the necessity of affirming "George is an individual" does not prejudge the question of metaphysical interpretation.

Neither 'George is an individual" nor its criteria involve framework concepts. There is no immediate and necessary move from "George is an individual" to "individual" as a formal concept valid for all entities. On this level, Strawson's conclusions about coherence are challenged by historical counterexamples. Modes of unity and coherence are what different frameworks are all about.

I have argued, in effect, that Strawson cannot prove his framework is a pure description of ordinary language, and as a result the distinction between descriptive and revisionary metaphysics collapses. Strawson is caught in a tension between "descriptive metaphysics" and Wittgenstein. The more he insists on describing the whole grand framework of ordinary language, the more vulnerable he becomes to attacks on the neutrality of his description. On the other hand, the more he contents himself with pointing out analyses and giving the structure of various language games like identifying persons, the more he tends to fragment ordinary language into the motley of techniques and purposes and framework-parts Wittgenstein claims it is. This loses the generality and necessity Strawson wants for his results. In my presentation of his views, I may have pushed Strawson further away from Wittgenstein than he really stands. It remains true, however, that the tendencies which lead away from Wittgenstein are just those which allow Strawson to "overcome" the pluralism of frameworks. I have argued that Strawson's "necessary framework of ordinary language" is an unhappy mixture of several strands: (a) analysis of ordinary language, which may be necessary but serves as data,

not as framework; (b) a framework which is an interpretation but not necessary; and (c) the real necessity and primacy of ordinary language, in its own way and for its own purposes, which are not those of framework reconstruction. There is no continuity between "analysis of concepts" and "descriptive metaphysics". The word "descriptive" hides the gulf in status between local and total frameworks. Once we reject the notion of "descriptive metaphysics" we must also reject the notion of "revisionary metaphysics", since it wrongly suggests that there already exists a describable metaphysics of ordinary language.

Thus, as far as I have examined, there is no way to remove the plurality of frameworks.

I have been considering a variety of attempts to eliminate pluralism. In each case we have found that legitimate ways of dealing with individual frameworks have been developed into invalid arguments against pluralism, or for The One Framework. Either such arguments make covert appeal to the survey of all possible frameworks, or they invoke framework-dependent principles while claiming not to, or they presuppose unguaranteed meta-rules. I am not claiming to have refuted all possible ways of trying to reach The One Framework. For my own arguments, I cannot do so, but only deal with attempts as they arise. The same reasons that forbid a knockdown argument against pluralism also forbid such an argument for it. It may be that there is a way of obtaining a priori knowledge about concepts like "objects in general", or "experience in general". What attempts I know of this however fail; any successful attempt

would have to meet the various arguments in this chapter. There may be a way, but pluralism has been the perennial situation of philosophy and each successive revolution proclaiming the method only adds to the plurality.

On the other hand, we must be clear about what the conclusion entails. The pluralism of frameworks means that we cannot give absolute a priori arguments for one framework, that there are always new modes of unity possible and no way to preclude them. It does not mean scepticism or extreme relativism. We cannot conclude that all frameworks are equal, or that any one will do, or that our proper stance is neutrality. If I have reasons for holding a framework, pluralism does not say I must give them up. It only says that they are always challengeable from unforeseen points of view. This fact does not by itself constitute a challenge to my framework, but it does destroy any claims that no other framework is even possible.

Although further possibilities are always open, I can still choose from among the possibilities that I know. The pluralist can draw conclusions and hold them with more grace than the anti-pluralist because he does not pretend to have excluded all others. He merely thinks his are the best he has seen so far. Affirming pluralism does not mean the end of metaphysical argument. Indeed, it may be the very motive for metaphysics. It means getting down to work with the issues, instead of producing a priori arguments which settle the matter from above. And from a personal side, affirming pluralism makes life interesting.

We reach this optimistic conclusion because nothing in the argument so far forces us to conclude that we cannot have good reasons for preferring one framework to another. The next chapter will examine this claim; I will argue that we can have reasons for holding frameworks, and I will discuss the nature of those reasons.

Chapter Five

REASON AND THE EXTENT OF FRAMEWORKS

We can find reasons for preferring one framework over another by considering criteria derived from the goals of framework reconstruction.

In Chapter Three I defended the legitimacy of metaphysical frameworks as a way of fulfilling certain goals. In Chapter Four I argued that pluralism of frameworks is inevitable. Taken together, these conclusions threaten a *reductio ad absurdum* of the whole enterprise. For if we never get to The Framework, how can we fulfil our goals? Without the certainty that we can reach our goals, why even try? Reconstruction only makes sense then if we can have reasons for preferring one framework over another.

We need some basis for judging which frameworks are better than others. This is not a need for some *a priori* judgment on all frameworks; rather, we are seeking the criteria for framework reconstruction, the motives and values of the metaphysical activity. Reasons for preferring one thing to another might be conceived as links from some larger accepted context of the particular item being considered. And without repeating the problem in a regressive argument, we can see that there are no longer conceptual structures to provide a context for metaphysical frameworks; thus it seems that our search would stop here with arbitrary choice or brute receptivity. But this line of thought mistakenly supposes that the larger context must be another set of concepts and rules, instead of purposes and goals.

We have already seen that the task of framework reconstruction cannot be avoided by a priori arguments. It remains a task of interpreting data and seeking unifying principles. It is something we do to reach certain goals. If a framework does not fulfil those goals it does not do the job we want it to do. We design small vehicles to get us from place to place over medium distances and speeds. Normally they need wheels. This need is not an arbitrary restriction on our design or a traditional practice we blindly accept. There is no transcendental or mysterious necessity involved. An immobile car-like thing is not a car because it does not do what we want a car to do. We can treat it as a failed car, a sculpture, a small house, an outdoor storage closet, but not as a vehicle.

One thing we ask of a metaphysics is that it provides an account of the possibility of the unity of entities through time. If a suggested set of principles has no way of doing so, we will treat it as a bad attempt, an aesthetic object, or an interesting formal exercise — but not as a successful framework. It does not do what we want a framework to do.

It is important to see that this leaves open how a framework accounts for unity through time. Our vehicles must be mobile, but they move by wheels, treads, ground-effect fans, runners, etc. Similarly, many different ontologies seem to account for unity through time.

The analogy can carry us one step further. A vehicle is not just something mobile; it must be relatively inex-

pensive (which rules out ground-effect machines) and not tear up the highways (which rules out treads). Out of the material and techniques at hand, we create a vehicle to meet a cluster of such intersecting purposes. Likewise our frameworks must meet two interlocking sets of criteria: our combined purposes and the data we interpret.

In Chapter Three I discussed a number of goals for framework reconstruction. They included (a) unifying data to settle conflicts about what is real, possible, or important. Such conflicts arise among data in one's own experience, between individuals, and between groups. (b) Using the unifying function to provide a basis for deeper and larger communities. (c) Criticizing one's self or community in terms of consistency, harmony, and the relevance of various areas to each other. (d) Meeting time: keeping our structures of thought and action adequate in the face of change and novelty.

As they stand, these goals provide criteria. They also give rise to other principles. For instance, the goal of unification can give us the Philebus principle referred to earlier: treat every entity as both one and many. The goals of unification and meeting time combine to support the principle that a framework should give an account of the possibility of the unity of an entity through time. The goal of self-criticism demands that frameworks be consistent and communicable and that they contain self-reflective principles. We often use this criterion against the kind of "philosophy" found in some popular magazines. Unification and self-criticism together recommend the hard-

to-define values, sometimes called "aesthetic", such a simplicity, elegance, fruitfulness, harmony, flexibility, clarity, and the like. Speaking of these, John Findlay remarks: "like all values they lie in very varied directions, and there are often relations of practical antinomy among them."[1] We have a series of norms, but this does not mean they will all recommend the same conclusion. Judgment is required, because the criteria we have mentioned, and others which can be derived from our goals, function in the way Thomas Kuhn describes when talking about the reasons for choosing a scientific theory.

> . . . such reasons constitute values to be used in making choices rather than rules of choice. Scientists who share them may nevertheless make different choices in the same concrete situation. Two factors are deeply involved. First, in many concrete situations, different values, though all constitutive of good reason, dictate different conclusions, different choices. In such cases of value-conflict (e.g. one theory is simpler but the other more accurate) the relative weight placed on different values by different individuals can play a decisive role in individual choice. More important, though scientists share these values and must continue to do so if science is to survive; they do not all apply them in the same way. Simplicity, scope, fruitfulness, and even accuracy can be judged quite differently (which is not to say they may be judged arbitrarily) by different people. Again, they may differ in their conclusions without violating any accepted rule.[2]

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[1] John Findlay, The Transcendence of the Cave (London; Allen and Unwin, 1966), p. 54.

[2] Thomas Kuhn, "Reflections on my Critics", in Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge ed. Imre Lakatos and Alan Musgrave (Cambridge University Press, 1977), pp. 231-278. See p. 262.

We can find reasons for preferring one metaphysical framework over another from what it means to "deal with" framework data.

The other great source of framework-criteria is the data we interpret. Because data are structured independently of any framework they can provide norms. "Dealing with the data" is an abbreviation for the task of accounting for an immense variety of concrete structures. Although data can be reinterpreted, they are not intellectual prime matter. There is such a thing as "going too far". Parmenides went too far when he simply denied the existence of change. Plato deals with change rather than dismissing it; he is more adequate than Parmenides, even if his theory of change is itself less adequate than that of Aristotle.

And if in fact Plato is more adequate than Parmenides, we have a criterion which can be used all through philosophy, at least in a general way. For example, if quantum mechanics is an important datum, a framework can be challenged to account for it or to explain why it does not have to.

Another form of adequacy is the ability of a framework to account for important data. This includes not only those data which an individual or community deem important, but also the omnipresent problems like permanence and change, qualitative individuality, interaction and connection. These are found in every realm of experience and discourse. Given our goals of unity and self-criticism, we would not tolerate a "framework", which accounted for change or causality as an afterthought from principles designed to account for dreams or a religious symbol. One

mark of the bad philosopher is the inability to see which questions should come first. "Consider the numerous Anglo-American thinkers who spend their time trimming the edges of 'if' and 'but' without making any forays into the world to see what is truly iffy and butty about the world."[3]

I have spoken so far of judging whether a framework avoids data or goes too far in dealing with them. We also judge a framework's ability to deal with varied data; with religion and politics, art and history, qualitative individuality and the practices of B. F. Skinner. Certain Eastern philosophies seem to do justice to mystical experience, but they have few resources to deal with other areas such as the physical sciences.

What distinguishes metaphysical frameworks from other forms of philosophical and symbolic unification of experience is the use of the concept of "entity as such" and of trans-categorial principles. The criteria I have mentioned seem a natural consequence of employing such principles for the purpose of unifying and criticizing data. The goal and the means dictate the criteria. These specific criteria have no mysterious, absolute status. Their necessity is hypothetical. If we want to unify by means of framework principles, these are the criteria we will find ourselves using, since they are nothing but reflections of the goals we seek.

This then covers the general answer to the question "What are the reasons for preferring one framework to another?" And the criteria have been found in the context of goals and purposes for framework reconstruction. The actual list of criteria is not strikingly novel. As it stands, however,

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[3] A personal comment made to me by Jeffrey Reiman, Professorof Philosophy, the American University, Washington, D.C.

our answer is incomplete. There is much to add to make it adequate. In doing so I will uncover the roots of the dichotomy "arbitrary choice versus brute receptivity". It will also be seen more clearly what it means to speak of the context of an activity.

The possibility remains that any arbitrary framework could interpret the criteria to justify itself.

At the end of the third chapter I asked if there could be any norms that would survive pluralism and give us reasons for preferring one framework to another. The norms for comparing and judging frameworkswere then found in the goals of framework reconstruction. But how can we know when those purposes are fulfilled? For example, how can we distinguish really "accounting for the possibility of the unity of an entity through time" from appearing to do so or believing or declaring that we have done so? A metaphysical numerologist might claim he accounts for that unity by assigning numbers to each kind of entity, and pointing to mystical correspondences among the integers connected with temporal entities. And why not? This can be put in terms of some neo-pythagorean transcategorial principles and spelled out according to our framework rubric. Presuming it avoids internal problems, why isn't it as good an account as Aristotle's? If all we have to do to fulfil the criterion is give an account, does not this fill the requirements? Any reasons you might cite to show it doesn't are purely reflections on your own framework.

The problem is clear. Any framework-constructor seems able to explain away or deny any norms by which we might

show his claimed account or "dealing with the data" is inadequate. This means that "giving an account" reduces perilously close to "saying anything you want". If any way of declaring we have fulfilled the criteria is to count as actually filling them, our criteria are shown up as shams, and framework reconstruction is an arbitrary activity.

We have been relying on the idea that criteria for an activity can be obtained from its context and goals. The present objection is based on the presupposition that the thinker can define for himself how the goals are to be fulfilled. He can interpret them in his framework so that there is no distinction between really fulfilling them and appearing to do so, since there remains no independent or uninterpreted context to serve as background for such a judgment.

This objection challenges us to spell out the context of framework reconstruction in a way that gives more definiteness to its goals. The further determinations of the goals must be such that they cannot be defined arbitrarily to fit any framework at all. Such further determinations exist but they are not the same for all thinkers. This then places an additional burden on us: to show that this new pluralism is not destructive of rationality.

<u>To avoid interpreting criteria from within the framework to justify itself we need to add to the goals further determinations which cannot be interpreted arbitrarily</u>.

An answer to the objection can be approached by considering the idea that while there must be <u>some</u> context

for framework reconstruction, there need not be any particular context. We can distance ourselves from and interpret by our framework any determinations of our context, but not all of them at once. This suggested approach to an answer may be inadequate, but the reasons for its inadequacy will bring us to the heart of the problem.

The analogy with the reconstruction of a ship expresses this point well.[4] Consider that we are on a ship sailing under way. We cannot dismantle the entire ship, but we can repair or replace any particular part. No item is sacred, but that does not imply that everything can be repaired at once. While we repair one part of the ship we rely on the others we are not repairing.

This analogy is often cited against a Cartesian universal doubt. We do not need a sacred guarantee for some particular part of the ship in order to move at all. Questioning need not be a search for absolute foundations. I agree with these points and the analogy seems appropriate for making them.

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[4] The ship analogy is often quoted in arguments against total scepticism; it suggests that since some knowledge is used to examine other knowledge then any plan to criticize all knowledge at once becomes paradoxical. The analogy originated with Otto Neurath and was more recently used by Quine. Reference to this can be found in Ivan Soll's An Introduction to Hegel's Metaphysics (University of Chicago Press, 1969), pp. 76-77.

On this same point Hegel writes: "But the examination of knowledge can only be carried out by an act of knowledge . . . to seek to know before we know is as absurd as the wise resolution of Scholasticus, not to venture into the water until he had learned to swim." G. W. F. Hegel, The Logic of Hegel tran. from 'The Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Science' by William Wallace (Oxford University Press, 1972), p. 17.

But here I would like to change the analogy slightly to see if the "any but not all at once" move it embodies helps to answer the objection demanding further determinations for framework goals. Can things we are not now questioning give us criteria for our present questions? Does the rest of the ship tell us how to remodel the part we are now working on? It cannot be so. Provided we take long enough doing it and go through enough intermediate steps, we can remodel the whole ship any way we choose. If we can in truth change anything, then no currently unquestioned context can be normative. It can at most be a challenged to our ingenuity.

There is a deep reason behind this failure. We can approach it by asking "Who is planning the changes on the ship?" Imagine one solitary officer, late at night in his cabin, making the decisions for the next day's work. He is the villain of our framework-dilemma, and the source of the objection we are considering. He can order any part of the ship to be changed. What criteria does he use to decide which orders to give?

The present state of the ship provides no norms for him because he can order it all changed, although he must do so by clever stages. He seems an unmoved mover with the whole context under his control. While he cannot effect his changes in an arbitrary order, his overall plan can be chosen at random. This arbitrariness is built into the "any but not all at once". There is nothing in his context that cannot be eventually brought into the foreground and willed to be different. As a result, once he settles

problems of internal consistency, there is no difference between his actually making this ship beautiful and his declaring that he has done so. We must not be misled by introducing our own judging eye into the analogy. To get the force of the image we must take his seat, not stand by his side like an invisible critic. According to the objection we are considering, when we work with frameworks we <u>are</u> in his seat. There is no invisible narrator or judge with "the true view" whether or not the ship is beautiful, whether or not our framework really accounts for unity through time.

But of course this serenely Detached Planner is a fiction. On any real ship an officer would be guided by obvious norms. He would repair parts of the ship whose malfunction threatened the purpose of its voyage, whether that was to carry wheat or oil, to sail the tropics or the North Atlantic. As presented the ship is a philosophic Flying Dutchman, forever "on the way". In order to pretend our planner is in total control, we have removed any overall purpose for his voyage. We have allowed him to decide what continuity (if any) will link the various changes he orders. This is the fiction; any real ship is going somewhere definite, with a definite cargo. The officer only facilitates this goal; he has no sovereign arbitrariness. There exists some particular definite context, an activity which gives him guidance because he is already involved in it, because it makes him what he is, a planner on this voyage.

I have ridden the ship analogy long enough. The point is that the serenely Detached Constructor is equally a fiction. The objection that there is no way to judge whether we have fulfilled our framework goals depends on being able to detach ourselves from our entire context (at once or in parts, it makes no difference). If there is any particular activity we are always already involved in, then we do not have the sovereign power required to avoid all norms. There are determinations which make us what we are, and working with frameworks remains something we do.

An adequate account of non-arbitrary determinations must deny our presumed ability to detach ourselves from all context.

I shall now discuss the possibility of purifying our subjectivity. This is not an idle question. Only by presupposing a purely detached subjectivity can thinkers claim there are no norms for framework choice.

We have seen from the ship analogy that to have no norms would mean being free of all determining context, or, what amounts to the same thing, being able to absorb all context into an interpretation. The objection that we can have no way to tell if we really fulfil our framework goals pictures us as faced with a demand to choose or evaluate, but not already involved (or, still involved) in an activity that furnishes norms. This is inconsistent: if it is true that we are so detached, how can we be faced with a demand to choose? Such a demand must come from a determining

context or an activity already under way. If we are faced with a genuine demand to choose, we will have a basis for norms. If framework construction is a genuine activity, it cannot exist as a tension between a real demand and a lack of criteria.

Framework construction seems to put us in this predicament because it involves objectivizing our rules. By looking at local frameworks as local and by envisioning various possible total views, we take structures of rules which we usually just follow, and see them as located among other possibilities.

We constantly use this process of objectivization. For instance, we can detach today's weather from what surrounds us generally, and consider what other conditions of temperature, clouds, air pressure, and precipitation might have occurred. To do this we must have an idea "weather" which contrasts with other continuing states around us like "climate", "scenery", "state of health", "season of the year". We also need various sets of contrasting predicates such as cloudy-partially cloudy-clear, hot-warm-cool-cold, etc. These combine to define various possible weather conditions. Finally we must be able to consider today's weather as related to the space of possibilities defined by the predicates.

To objectivize a framework, we must have a description of a local or total structure which makes it a distinguishable whole. We also need a space set up by various modal predicates, and various possible sets of relations and trans-

lation rules among different sets of principles and objects. Then we must explicitly consider the framework in relation to that space of possibilities. Thus we consider various possible priorities and relationships; we ask if its principles are those for "being as such", if talk about its entities should be translated into that of another level, etc.

When we discuss the possible weather states there is a larger context we do not question: the evidence and criteria for describing the weather. With frameworks everything becomes questionable because of the peculiar appearance/reality distinction mentioned in Chapter Three. If I appeal to some norm to justify my account of the relation of science and common sense, you can always reply "Is that really the norm to use?" and "What does it rest upon?" Framework questioning seems to have no clearcut place to stop. If we carry the questioning out all the way, no structure will be left standing as a norm. All will be seen to need further reasons. We will be forced to set up one arbitrary structure as our final context. Or, if we do not carry the questioning out all the way, we will have norms that are merely received, and operate only because we are unaware of their possible contingency.

Clearly we do objectivize rules and conceptual structures. But does this become so epidemic? Can we carry this process out all the way and objectivize everything? We will be led astray if this question makes us concentrate on the <u>objects</u> of the framework questioning instead of the

act itself. Is it part of some activity that is already going on? Is there an operative context for my present act of questioning? If so, it will have norms. The objection we are considering presupposes that I can become an uninvolved subjectivity, a pure observing eye for which all activities, goals, and contexts are objects among other possible objects. But all this is not possible!

Recall that most philosophical representatives of pure subjectivity (transcendental egos, idealist minds, and in some conceptions, God) have been a-temporal, and had the whole world for the object they transcend or constitute. This is appropriate, since a totally pure subjectivity must see everything at once, or else it would have a point of view which could only result from a determining context, and with that context would come norms. But how could I take on such a role? I can understand what it means to objectivize some limited issue. Thus, in order to write a memograph on voting behaviour I might deliberately objectivize my own reactions and opinions. But I would do this as part of a larger purposive activity. What would total detachment mean? How would I make sure my present act of objectivization was not already involved in some activity that gave me criteria? My present act is one of a sequence, not an isolated atomic doing. Part of its content is its relation to a specific past and future, to a specific context and an overall activity. By what sequence of such acts could I arrive at a pure state? What route would I follow? Which would be the last determination I objectivized? Pure detachment would demand a dis-

continuity I cannot perform. And if I found myself suddenly in the pure state, what then? How would I get back into the stream of sequential action and reasons? Would I arbitrarily pick an activity to join? Or would I just become inattentive and slip back into a context — but which one?

There is no determinate transition in either direction linking such an indeterminate pure state with our sequential determinations. This is why a purely detached subject would have no norms. It is also why we can never take on that role. But if we cannot take it on, neither can the sequential activity of framework reconstruction put us into it. It may seem that some detached pure "I" objectivizes norms and rules, or results from such objectivization. But this questioning is done by the everyday responsible "I". My actions remain my actions, intended within all the complicated strivings and history of my life and community. Self-reflection can make me aware of these complications, but it does not disengage me from them or prevent my acts (even my acts of questioning) from having personal, political, and cultural consequences. Now does self-reflection alter after the fact that my questioning is done for a purpose which arises out of those strivings: to reconcile science and religion, to assure the triumph of materialism, to defend my cultural values, or whatever. I detach myself <u>for a reason</u> — that is to say, I am still attached. "Purifying my subjectivity" is not itself a pure act.

The picture of ourselves as totally pure subjects arises because we take the idea of detachment too far, and

imagine we could carry it out "all the way". We also imagine we could survey all possible frameworks. But the pure subject who sees all local and total rules as possibly different, without presupposing any operative context for doing so, would have to see the rules in terms of (in the logical space of) The One Framework, or of all possible frameworks. The same faulty notion of subjectivity is at the root of these errors.

We are already determined by activities and strivings which cannot be changed by fiat and which give the required definiteness to our goals.

In the past pages I have argued that the picture of a totally pure, context-free subjectivity cannot be applied to us. This allows us to answer the objection I have been considering. As they were stated at the beginning of this chapter the goals of framework reconstruction proved too indefinite to furnish us with norms. Something about us provides their further determinations. We consider some types of data more important, and allow their interpretations to set the tone for others. When push comes to shove, we prefer their claims. We may feel logic is crucial, or philosophy of science, or religion. We may value common sense, or not. We may think political and social philosophy is prime business or a matter for the application of principles gained elsewhere. We mayhave a taste for hierarchy, or for reduction, for richness or frugality. This will influence what transcategorial principles seem obvious or possible, and which options will be live, which

dead. And these kinds of preferences are indicated when we appeal to "our intuitions" to justify an overall program. The other "ultimate structures" I spoke of at the end of the first chapter may at times play a determining role here; that is, an influence of our most general categories, our most general categories which can reinterpret data, our most general rules for conceptual thinking, and our given framework from which (and only which) we can deal with other frameworks. In addition, we may have particular ways of asking philosophic questions.

An even more persuasive influence is found in the Greek idea that "wonder" is the beginning of philosophy. Onthis point Heidegger writes:

> Plato says (Theatet, 155 d): "For this is especially the pathos (emotion) of a philosopher, to be astonished. For there is no other beginning of philosophia than this."
>
> The pathos of astonishment thus does not simply stand at the beginning of philosophy, as for example, the washing of his hands precedes the surgeon's operation. Astonishment carries and pervades philosophy.
>
> . . . astonishment . . . pervades every step of philosophy.
>
> In astonishment we restrain ourselves. We step back, as it were, from being, from the fact that it is as it is and not otherwise . . . Of a very different sort [than astonishment] is that tuning which made thinking decide to ask in a new way the traditional question of what being is, in so far as it is, and thus begin a new

> era in philosophy. In his Meditations Descartes does not ask only, and does not ask first, ti to on, what being is, in so far as it is. Descartes asks what that being is that is true being in the sense of the ens certum. For Descartes, the essence of certitudo has changed in the meanwhile, for in the Middle Ages certitudo does not signify certainty but the fixed deliminatation of a being in that which it is . . . . Out of the attunement to this certitudo the language of Descartes obtains the determination of a [clear and distinct perceiving]. The tuning of doubt is the positive acquiescence in certainty. Henceforth, certainty becomes the determining form of truth. The tuning of confidence to the absolute certainty of knowledge which is attainable at all times is pathos and thus . . . the beginning of modern philosophy.[5]

These varying preferences and basic approaches run deeper than an individual's distinctive gestures or a community's local accent. They are strivings we find ourselves involved in. It may seem odd to call a preference for hierarchy a "striving" since I cannot spend a free half-hour "preferring hierarchy over reduction". Yet I do prefer hierarchy and try to realize it in many ways,

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[5] Martin Heidegger, What is Philosophy? tran. William Kluback and Jean Wilde (New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1958). See pp. 79, 81, 83, 85-89. Heidegger maintains that philosophical concepts must be grasped to be understood: this is possible only if the mind is attuned or disposed for the grasping of the idea. The term "tuning" implies this disposition.

"It is not how things are in the world that is mystical, but that it exists". Ludwig Wittgenstein, Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus tran. D. F. Pears and B. F. McGuinnes (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1961), p. 149, # 6.44.

although the striving shows up only as a modification of other activities. It is fundamental enough to appear in my philosophy, in my artistic taste, in how I arrange my room or teach school, and in how I act when I want to be different and so become aggressively anti-hierarchical.

Such determinations can be shared. Indeed, some of the deepest cultural bonds are shared strivings for a certain mode of unity in different areas of life. The determinations we are speaking of are not all rules that tell members of a given language or cultural community "what to do". They are not all enforced under pain of having our actions unreciprocated or met with incomprehension (as are the rules for making statements or giving orders). If I do not correspond to the cultural preference for hierarchy, I am not out of communication, although I may get arrested. Such determinations do not tell us "what to do" but rather "how we do it". This was the fault with the earlier description of framework goals. It was accurate enough about "what we do" but gave no information about how the goals are specified. In a real situation, I always seek unity respecting some data and modes of unity more than others, favouring particular modes of self-criticism and definite attitudes towards time. Without these further determinations, there is no goal we can intend, although an intended goal can be described abstractly without mentioning the additional determination.

Since these determinations frequently pervade other activities and have nospecial location of their own, we have to gather them in by interpreting the results of the

other activities. This task is often carried out more by critics and students of culture than by philosophers. It is a hermeneutic task. This is even true for the individual or community seeking to discover its own determinations. The strivings are too pervasive to be easily inspected; the determinations are part of the basic projects that structure an individual's or community's intentional space.

An adequate account of these determinations would involve a theory of subjectivity which would answer such questions as:

> Are these pervasive strivings derived from or antecedent to a multiplicity of smaller strivings?
>
> How are individual determinations related to intersubjective ones?
>
> How are these determinations related to the material factors and institutional patterns that seem both their effect and their cause?
>
> How do such determinations change?

We do not need a full theory of subjectivity here; our question concerned only the existence of such determinations. The appropriate theory seems to me one which sees subjectivity as a process with a formal structure of its own (self-reflection, intentionality). This formal process has goals that can be described with equal abstractness (unity, temporality, self-acceptance, grounding). Both the goals of framework reconstruction and those of the "alternative program" can be seen as more concrete versions of these abstract goals. However, the formal process of sub-

jectivity does not exists as such. Concrete subjects exist with contingent historical determinations to give them place and shape. And it is only in some such contingent situation that a subject can exist. Without such determinations, subjects do not exist at all.

The most important fact about these determinations is that they cannot be changed by fiat. I cannot wish away my interest in hierarchical structures and my feeling that philosophy ought to use them. I can resolve not to give in to the feeling; I can begin arguing differently. But this would not be sincere. Intellectual options and preferences which define us have a deep personal level. Even if we view them as afflictions, they hang on. We cannot decree them gone. All we can do is to keep putting ourselves in circumstances that may bring about a change, and hope to wake some morning to find that we have a new basic feeling. The alteration takes place behind our backs, when we are not looking. Whether it comes by a sudden conversion or a long growth, we cannot say we brought it about simply through an act of will. We do not give these feelings to ourselves; we cannot take them away. We find ourselves with them. Indeed, we find ourselves with them; they give us content and shape.

When we perform the difficult interpretation that lets us formulate our own fundamental determinations, we see them as contingent, opposed to other possibilities which "we" might have been. We can also explain them and study their causes. But objectivizing these fundamental deter-

minations has an odd result. Even while I see my taste for hierarchy as contingent, I may be comparing it with other possible tastes in order to rank them hierarchically. I do not escape my determinations and becomes a detached pure "I". The force of these fundamental determinations does not reside in perceived necessity or presumed uniqueness. They can be perceived as contingent selections from many possibilities, and still retain their force. They derive their impact from shaping my subjectivity. They give "me" form and definiteness; they give my actions a point. Without them my goals would be too abstract to be intended. As a result, the moves used to construct frameworks ("put it in a larger context", "see it as one among many other possibilities", "link it with principles to account for its possibility") have no effect on the power of these determinations. Nor can a framework interpretation make them different from what they are, or define them in some arbitrary way. They are operative even when they are seen as objects, because they provide the point for the whole enterprise of objectivization. Thus our framework goals do have more content than just "unity" of "self-criticism".

If we were to have no strivings, no fundamental determinations to give additional definiteness to our goals, then we would have no norms for choosing one framework over another. There could be no motive for the framework we end up with. Neither would we have any real reason to bother choosing a framework at all. In such a pointless exercise, arbitrariness or brute receptivity would seem to be the options. This can happen when we are not engaged in

the game and only go through the motions of an activity we see no point to. In such a case it is not surprising that we have no criteria.

Although the determinations are not the same for all men, this does not mean we must mistrust our reasons for framework choice or give up self-criticism.

Although I have answered the original objection, I am not yet finished because the objection might be rephrased to take account of my answer.

> Granted that we never find ourselves hanging suspended between options with no norms for choice, because then we wouldn't really be under a demand to choose.
>
> Granted too that we have fundamental strivings and determinations which give us norms and determine our goals more concretely.
>
> Still, these strivings and determinations are contingent. The norms and reasons that result from them can be challenged. Why then should I credit them as good reasons?

To answer this we must look more closely at the process of self-criticism. It is a mistake to give up a reason because it could be challenged, although we have no particular concrete challenge to face. This whole chapter is an argument that the possibility of being challenged is not itself a challenge. (Only if we presuppose it is, or think we have excluded all possible challenges, does pluralism offer insurmountable difficulties). We are now in a better position to see why this is not a challenge. Since we can always reflect on our fundamental determinations and

see them as contingent, we can always ask of our reasons "are they really good reasons?" We can ask this even when we have no specific challenge in mind. If we do, it is true that at least we will have no criteria to help us answer the question. This is because we really haven't asked any questions. Just as we have no criteria for deciding it, we have no reason to ask it. Doubt needs a ground. When something specific (a new scientific theory, a puzzle about perception) challenges our reasons, then we ask a real question and have criteria. Self-reflection is something we do and it must have a point or it becomes an empty ritual. What does happen is that we take the case as it is for us.

As shown earlier, even locating fundamental determinations is difficult since they are too pervasive for direct inspection. We come to know them by an interpretation of our activities that leads us to see a given determination as a unity. The process is similar to uncovering an unreflective framework, and has the same results: what we find words to name we see as potentially questionable. This is the first requirement for self-criticism, but it is not enough. A potential question is not a question, and we cannot decree it into actuality. We need some striving against which we can measure the alternatives, some concern already present (although perhaps just discovered reflectively) which makes us take seriously a question like "Does hierarchy or reduction better realize my goal of . . . ?" That is, we need some fundamental de-

termination which gives a point to the question. Self-criticism is not a pure act.

Fundamental determinations are similar to Plato's notion of eros – the driving force of life aspiring to the absolute Good, the motive underlying education, fine art and philosophy. The Sophists claimed there was no way to measure different systems of norms against one another. Plato points out that since we strive for the Good, through the Forms, it makes sense to ask what system of norms best fulfils this striving. Eros makes the question possible, makes us take it seriously, and furnishes criteria. Furthermore, eros is no casual desire; it makes us what we are. To really ask a question about norms is to have come in touchwith a deeper striving than we knew we had. Acknowledging eros is an act of faithfulness to ourselves, an admission that the question touches something important to us. Without this appeal to eros, questioning becomes a destructive and pointless game.

Platonic eros was to be one and the same in all men. Fundamental determinations as we have described them are many and contingent. It remains true that discovering them involves self-knowledge and the honesty to admit that we do find ourselves with definite basic concerns. If self-criticism is not to be an empty ritual and not just supposing a case, it must get in touch with a striving that allows us to see other fundamental determinations and their alternatives as means to a deeper goal. But determinations vary. There is no unique deepest striving. We are not

so unified in ourselves that there need be a linear ordering of our desires according to depth, nor need the ordering be the same in various individuals and groups. Empirical research and careful interpretation might discover just how much sharing there is between individuals and communities; what is important is that in principle there is no barrier to pluralism. Self-knowledge and self-criticism may end with different fundamental determinations and no common eros to judge that plurality.

This ultimate pluralism must be accepted, although with severe qualifications. After all, as long as we see the diverse determinations as a multiplicity that asks for judgment, we have already unified them in terms of some striving. We would not see as a problem totally diverse determinations unrelated to any goal.

We can go further. There is a point of view from which all fundamental determinations can be seen as related to one set of goals. The last few pages have spoken from that point of view, a theory of the formal process of subjectivity which sees these determinations as necessary for the existence of concrete subjects. Unfortunately, the formal goals of subjectivity are themselves too abstract to furnish decision procedure, but they do provide a unified description of the role fundamental determinations play.

This point of view results from an interpretation of our activities. We have no intellectual intuition, even of ourselves. A theory of subjectivity remains just a theory, not the luminous presence of subjectivity to itself, or a transcendental structure grasped in its necessity. Giving content to "subjectivity as such" is open to the

same difficulties as giving content to "object as such" or "being as such". We cannot guarantee a content for the concept; we cannot legislate a content; we must, in the end, simply take the case that is before us and be content without necessity.

Thus, although we can find some norms for criticizing frameworks, there are no ultimate norms for judging fundamental determinations. We find ourselves in activities and strivings which we can criticize only because of further determinations which we may or may not be aware of and which could have been different. It seems that pluralism has cheated us out of our Socratic right to be fully self-critical. Without a secure place to stand, we cannot examine our lives.

On the contrary, that is all we can examine. We have no detached point of view that sees all possible determinations and delivers God's necessary judgment. Though we must stay where we are, is that not room enough? We can find out where we are and speak it. We can criticize our thought or our community in the name of deeper strivings than it ordinarily knows, or strivings that it denies and represses. We can seek and take our stand with the basic determinations that constitute us and our society and with the unrealized possibilities these determinations open up. What we cannot do is be self-founding, totally guaranteed — this is one of our most dangerous illusions, one that cuts us off from our own rich possibilities. Of course, pluralism tells us that there are <u>other</u> determinations and other possibilities.

But they are not ours, nor can we strip ourselves naked to put them on. Why should we even try? The question is not ours — unless the others are already in harmony with strivings which, perhaps, we did not know we had. There is always more to learn, and more to be, but this does not require us to become as Gods, knowing The Good and Evil, seeing all possibilities and judging by absolute detached standards.

Our power of questioning and framework construction cannot be thought of as a pure force restricted by an outside context.

The objection that we can have no reasons (or no "good reasons") for framework choice envisions our ability to question and objectivize as a pure indeterminate power which will be restricted by structures and determinations. And this I have suggested is a dangerous epistemological myth.

The pure subjectivity I have been considering bears a striking resemblance to the Cartesian God whose will decides what is to be true and good. For instance, "eternal truths" are dependent on God; for Descartes there is the logical and metaphysical possibility that God could have made 2 plus 2 equal 5. Such a divine chooser is indeed detached; he has no context to deal with and hence needs no criteria. Further, he is self-moving, having and needing no outside determinations to action. His will is a pure structureless, contentless, self-moving power from which all determinations result.

We, however, are not totally creative. We are with things in time, we have bodies and histories. We are already in contexts which we did not create and which we cannot totally transcend. If, in this situation, we think of ourselves as possessing some pure indeterminate self-moving power (of construction, questioning, transcending, or whatever) we can only regard our context and given determinations as restrictions or alien forces. A pure indeterminate power is thinkable only outside any context, in a case where all relevant determinations result from its action. If we persist in picturing such a power in a context, there will be no determinate way to relate the two. The context will be a brute force pushing against the power, and the power will be arbitrary, with no norms for dealing with the context.

When we envision ourselves having some pure indeterminate power, we see fundamental determinations as forces impinging on us. But who then are "we"? Pure subjectivity? We do not give ourselves these determinations; we find ourselves with a shape. Without a shape there would be no selves to find, there would be no "we" to look for ourselves. Nor are we self-moving; we find ourselves already on the move in a definite direction. That motion <u>is</u> us, not some foreign pressures on a self which is naturally static or naturally self-moving. In some important ways Wittgenstein's writings bring us out of the illusion of such pure empty spaces and back home to that shape and that motion which is us.

We must conceive of a power (intellect, rationale) that exists only in and through given determinations. Platonic eros is not restricted by the determinations of the Forms it attains. It is the eros for those Forms; the Forms make it possible. Kantian finite reason is not "hemmed in" by the structures that make it possible. Without the structures there would be no objectivity, no possible knowledge.[6] Scientific inquiry is thus said to be "limited" to objects of sense perception; however, within the conditions of this limitation lies the structure of and thereby the possibility for genuine knowledge. I borrow this epistemic optimism from Kant. The following pattern is also Kant's: framework reconstruction is a synthetic activity, but there is no Ideal Synthesis it approaches. All synthesis is a mark of finitude and temporality.

Because the power behind framework reconstruction is not indeterminate or self-moving, we cannot exercise it

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[6]It is Kant's belief that reason and thought structures what sense intuition reports. Thought alone cannot know an object without an intermediary; that is, thought cannot know the thing itself without conditioning characteristics. For Kant any object to be known must conform to the constitutional requirements of the knower; it is not the concept that must conform to the object but rather that the object known must be characterized by the concept. This revolutionary approach in epistemology defined for Kant a new and powerful analysis of cognitive powers. Man's ability to understand was both limited and expanded: restricted to a dependence upon the given, man could know only experience; but because it was then possible to have knowledge of experience, man could develop true science and thus know just what can and cannot be subjected to valid scientific inquiry. See Immanuel Kant, Critique of Pure Reason tran. Norman Kemp Smith (New York: Macmillan, 1968), p.65, B-34.

I borrow from Kant the optimistic view about the structuring of experience limiting but thereby making knowledge possible. Unlike him, however, I am arguing for a plurality of possible knowledge structures, different world-views, sciences and metaphysics.

arbitrarily. We cannot give a point to actions that have none. Nor can we deny point or cogency to reasons that have it. Thus we cannot refuse a conclusion just because we know it could be challenged. We have reasons for preferring one framework over another.

As Wittgenstein points out, the giving of reasons must come to an end.[7] Yet we are not left hanging, for the asking of real questions goes no further. Not because questions are arbitrarily cut off, nor because further questions would be nonsense. We can envision places for further questions. Only we cannot decree those places filled, as we cannot guarantee them forever empty.

Pluralism and rationality are both expressions of our finitude.

I have thus far argued for the viability of pluralism for metaphysical systems by reconciling pluralism and rationality. We can affirm there is no One Framework and still have reasons for choosing one framework over another. The dichotomy I began with, "either arbitrary choice or brute receptivity", has been shown to depend on a false notion of subjectivity. It presupposes the pure subject, empty of any determinations, surveying possibilities and putting itself in motion to choose. Opposing this false description, I have emphasized human finitude. We are always in a context and already in motion; we do not possess the pure view that would be required to remove pluralism.

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[7] See for instance ### 188, 192 and 204 in Ludwig Wittgenstein, On Certainty ed. G. E. M. Anscombe and G. H. von Wright, tran. Denis Paul and G. E. N. Anscombe (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1969).

Yet, for the same reasons, we always have norms for framework choice. We find ourselves already determined by goals, preferences, and strivings which we cannot change by fiat. We do not arbitrarily choose our fundamental determinations, nor do we question them arbitrarily. Self-criticism comes from finding a deeper motion that gives us real alternatives, not from an empty ritual questioning whether our reasons are good enough.

It may seem that this solution avoids "arbitrariness" only to fall into "brute receptivity". True, it is not frameworks that we brutely receive, but we seem at the mercy of fundamental determinations that "put us in motion". Our preferences, our goals, even our self-criticism seem determined from outside. Can this be "rationality?"

In a way this objection (or at least "observation") must be granted. We are receptive — we are not God. Still, the objection misleads by raising the picture of outside forces impinging on an inner zone of freedom. The objection presupposes that "we" exist in some pure state and then receive an imprint from without. And this, I argued, was a false view of subjectivity. We do not accept or receive fundamental determinations; there is no "we" to accept them. They make us what we are. There is no place outside them where "we" wait to be put in motion. To be a subject is to be involved in concrete determinations and forms of life which give a point to our choices and decisions.

When we view ourselves as pure empty subjects separated from all context, we seem forced to give ourselves arbitra-

rily chosen determinations. When we view ourselves as pure empty subjects placed in a context, we seem forced to receive determinations. Both pictures are false, and for the same reason. Pluralism and rationality come together, because they are both expressions of our finitude.

The interplay of local principles and reflective totalization make it possible for us to become aware of our frameworks and criticize them.

Although we may be determined by unreflective local and total frameworks, we can become aware of them and self-consciously reconstruct them. How then is this possible?

As I have pointed out, the purely detached subject and the totally imprisoned subject are two sides of the same myth that separates our subjectivity from any given determinations. My answer then is that we can become aware of our frameworks because of the differences between local and total frameworks, and the fact that ordinary language has no total framework. Although we are already in a situation, already involved in activities and strivings, that situation and those strivings are not unified. Ordinary language is a motley of areas with no necessary built-in total view. Our fundamental determinations move us in conflicting directions. Any articulated totalization is an achieved synthesis, not a given prison. Whether we make it ourselves or have it handed down to us, it contains potential disorder, since it is a balance of various areas, strivings, and priorities. The fragmentation of our situa-

tion together with the synthetic character of any totality allows us to become aware of unreflective views and criticize them. There are goals and strivings in us other than those our framework emphasizes, other judgments of what is important, other areas with claims to priority. These make it possible for us to envision alternatives and so objectivize our frameworks.

At the same time, trying to create a reflective totalization helps us become aware of local areas as local, and so escape the prisons they can become when over extended into totalities. We can break their spell by bringing them in contact with one another or criticizing them in terms of a more articulated view of the whole. Although this description applies to our situation with regard to conceptual frameworks and metaphysics I suspect similar fragmentation and totalization could be found in the case of social and political frameworks. The situations are not completely parallel, however, because social and political structures are related in more complex ways to what I have called fundamental determinations of subjectivity.

None of what I've just said means that becoming self-reflective is easy. It demands imagination and fortunate circumstances to find the word or description that lets us objectivize a hitherto unreflective part of ourselves or our society. But what makes this possible is the interplay of local fragmentation and reflective totalization each working to increase our awareness and keep the other from imprisoning us. We do not need to be outside all

frameworks in order to be self-aware and critical.

The "Pure Subject" and his "One Framework" function as a regulative ideal.

In the last two sections we have seen how rational reconstruction is possible, as pluralism and rationality come together, both expressions of human finitude. If everything fits so neatly together, why, we may ask, does the illusion of the pure subject arise at all? Is it a vast mistake, or does it have some status, for the idea of a pure subject is a perennial error?

The notion of a pure subject and its corollary of the One Framework can be described to function in human experience as a "regulative ideal". It is an "ideal" in that it reaches beyond any particular point of view, and it claims to be free from any subjective determination as well as being applicable to all of reality. It is "regulative" in Rawl's sense that it is used to codify or regulate behaviour, experience, phenomena, etc. whose meanings can be understood prior to or independent of the ideal. The regulative ideal is thus to act as a rule to organize empirical data.

My basic thesis about metaphysical knowledge is that philosophy cannot be transcendental, that there can be no philosophical knowledge independent of human nature and the human situation in general. I have suggested how the mode of inquiry sketches in advance the context of meaning in which the inquiry will move, and thus I've suggested that

cognition is essentially finite. This context of meaning, however, changes as we critically objectivize our framework in the activity of reconstruction. I have thus argued against man transcending himself in any complete, detached sense. If philosophy must remain ethnocentric then the ideal of a pure subject is not needed; indeed, there is no pure subject or One Framework to be found.

We cannot appeal to the pure subject or the One Framework either to banish pluralism in principle or for a usable standard of rationality. We fall into error when we openly or implicitly claim this point of view and renounce the awareness that further questions are possible. This is not the awareness that we might have failed to follow the rules of our language or given an inappropriate response from among those available to describe some situation. Rather, it is the awareness that new questions could make us change that whole set of possible responses. To speak a language perfectly is not to speak a perfect language.

The pure point of view is an impossibility, an inconsistent notion; it is detached yet choosing, independent yet determined, self-moving yet influenced by other things to reflect their determinations faithfully. My description of the norms for framework choice amounts to replacing this rationalistic pure subject with a pragmatic one, the indefinitely expandable community trying to better its knowledge and language. Taken as an "achieved community with perfect knowledge", this too is an inconsistent ideal. Since we cannot arrive at a state where further questions can be excluded in principle, there can be no guaranteed perfect

language. Either as the view of the pure subject or as the perfect language of the ultimate community, the regulative ideal cannot be achieved, for it presupposes that we are finite enough to need a point of view or a language, but are not subject to these inevitable limitations. Instead of appealing to some unavailable divine norm, or to the suspect guarantee of rationalism or transcendental philosophy, I have emphasized our own historical process of questioning and comparing alternatives in the light of our experience and our goals. The theoretical failing of the regulative ideal is helpful, however, because it gives us a direction and a task of not taking our present language and framework for granted as perfect. It tells us to examine the conditions and presuppositions of our knowledge and seek more total, less idiosyncratic approaches. In theory, then, we are left 'in the middle' in good Platonic fashion: neither fully Being (playing the role of the pure subject, enjoying The One Framework) nor fully Non-Being (scepticism, no reason for framework choice).

There is always a difference between a theory and its practice. In science, history, literary criticism and even philosophy, without some discrepancy a theory would not provide a structure or purpose in its application. In the case of the regulative ideal of a pure subject, this difference is crucial. The regulative ideal <u>has</u> an important function, for it can be seen as the psychological desire for life in a stable world. Its perennial occurrence is the result of this authentic and immediate need — a regula-

tive ideal directs the constructive energies of our lives. In practice, it is expressed in local areas and is acted on as a form of knowledge, but not itself asserted as absolute knowledge. The theoretical inconsistency is not important because of this limited and merely temporal application.

We do not want to live a schizophrenic life, where one set of experiences do not relate to another. The regulative ideal is our first response to the immediate state of experience reaching beyond itself. We have a practical need to unify our world of experience and action. Basically, this desire is instinctual; it is the desire for survival. In the pursuit of our practical aims of survival, we are likely to meet situations in which we will encounter difficulties. These new difficulties will inform us of our ignorance, of the inadequacy of our present knowledge to achieve our practical aims. There is, then, a genuine but practical need for an expanded or comprehensive view of experience and the world we live in. The regulative ideal is thus an expression of our desire to live in <u>one world</u>, a world of fixed meanings. It is the desire for a world in which we can act reasonably in.

If the dialogue of philosophy described in the beginning of my thesis can be seen as the continual search for knowledge and wisdom, the path or direction of this dialogue is, in part, an interpretation of its past history. The search for truth is the motive for critical valuation and revision, and it is the method of metaphysical reconstruction. The present state of philosophical knowledge, however, will

someday itself be part of this history and interpretation. Thus the direction of the search for truth is forever changing. Criticism is the objectivization of concepts. Overemphasis on objectivization neglects the subjective determinations and so we often think of our knowledge out of context, as "really real" or as the truth. If as I maintain in my thesis-argument that we must accept human finitude not as a limit but as a means to metaphysical knowledge, then the critical appraisal of pluralism is part of this knowledge. Although the pure subject and the One Framework are inconsistent and unreachable, this criticism reminds us that we are uniquely human; unrealistic, it nevertheless serves us as a regulative ideal of our studies, forever pushing us beyond our present visions.

The present discussion may seem to violate the restrictions finitude imposes, but its description of the activity of framework reconstruction is no more and no less neutral than any other datum.

We must now face a problem about this argument as a whole. Is the existence of my thesis-argument a counter-example of its conclusions?[8] This objection can be urged in three ways: (a) What is the status of the thesis-argument? Is it a neutral meta-discourse about framework disputes? If so, it contradicts what was said earlier about the impossibility of such a neutral stance. (b) Are the criteria to be used in judging the thesis-argument themselves frame-

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[8] Self-refutation is different from self-contradictory. Consider the sentence: "It is impossible to use the words 'impossible' and 'English' together in an English sentence." There is no contradiction here, but the sentence provides a counter-example to itself. See Joseph Boyle, "Self-Referential Inconsistency, Inevitable Falsity and Metaphysical Argumentation", Metaphilosophy 3 (1972), pp. 25-42.

work dependent? And (c) Are paradoxes of self-reference involved in talk about all frameworks? (I will try to show how the principles of the earlier discussions can provide general answers to these questions).

In response to the first question, we can affirm that the thesis-argument is not neutral between frameworks, but neither is it the presentation of one more framework. Recall the basic principles of the whole discussion: although frameworks speak about everything, they are not absolute. There are activities which do not owe their origin or determination to frameworks. My thesis-argument is an example of the <u>other</u> main philosophical activity: analysis and description applied, in this case, to framework reconstruction itself. Like any philosophic analysis, it provides data that frameworks must deal with. These data are neutral in the sense that they are not described in terms of some one metaphysics. But they are not neutral in the further sense of being equally amenable to all frameworks. Even given the complexities of its relation to frameworks, data will still lead in certain directions. If it did not do this, it would have no value as evidence for or against frameworks. The thesis-argument here is not unique in this respect.

It is worthwhile glancing at the bias that results from my thesis-argument. For the most part, it bears on meta-categorial principles. Since these principles are often shared among many frameworks, the bias is not towards a specific framework but towards a cluster sharing common

methods. We saw earlier that these principles deal with the relation of framework-categories and principles in general to reality in general. The description given in my thesis-argument tends to go against the picture of that relation given in rationalist and transcendental philosophy. Chapters Two and Three can be seen as arguments and data supporting a more pragmatic and constructivist picture. If frameworks act as I have described them, then it is difficult to maintain a non-historical view of ontological categories, or any simple theory of their correspondence with unique "laws of reality", "deep structures", "transcendental conditions", and the like.

The thesis-argument has less clear-cut leanings among categorial and transcategorial principles, but it is not totally neutral. Although it asserts no metaphysical principles, it uses many local principles which tend to support certain metaphysics. For example, the process description of subjectivity given in the earlier part of this chapter would be hard to account for if persons are taken as primary entities of a substance ontology. The theory of subjectivity fits better into a process metaphysics (Hegelian or Whiteheadian) or a metaphysics where persons are dependent particulars. I have not generalized the local principles governing subjectivity into any of these claims but they could be used as evidence for such frameworks. Similarly, my principle that there is no determinate closed field of possible frameworks, that further new modes of cognitive unity are always possible, could be generalized into a Whiteheadian view of the emergence of new ontological modes

of unity and possibility. It may, however, be suggested that this assertion of the permanent possibility of new modes of cognitive unity hides an empirical presupposition that human culture will produce continual novelty. To some extent it does, although put more accurately what it presupposes is that in principle nothing bars the emergence of such novelty. But what if researches like those of Chomsky or Levi-Strauss were to prove somehow that the human modes of cognitive unification were finite and organized according to some general scheme? This would not lead to a unique metaphysics, but it might give us an empirically supported tableau of the only possible framework-types which escaped most of the objections I raised in Chapter Four. However, unless the theory also gave some way of relating and ranking frameworks it would only limit pluralism, not destroy it; none of my conclusions depend on there being an unlimited number of frameworks or of fundamental determinations.

Thus my analysis and description ends up fitting most conveniently into certain types of frameworks. This need not be special pleading. If you say it is, you must produce a different analysis that tries to avoid the pitfall. Then we will argue which is the better analysis. This argument could not be totally separated from framework considerations, but neither is it wholly their creature. If it were, philosophy would be much easier than it is.

My thesis-argument is to be judged by the criteria we use to interpret human activities as meaningful wholes, i.e. as activities within frameworks.

These last remarks raise the second main problem to face. How do we "argue which is the better analysis" when we are talking of framework reconstruction itself? What are the criteria of truth and evidence for the description found in my thesis-argument?

There is a dilemma here. If the criteria for accepting the description are themselves framework-dependent, then we are in danger of having as many descriptions as there are frameworks. Since the description includes the norms for accepting frameworks, this would lead to a plurality of self-enclosed, self-justifying frameworks. We would be back on our fictional ship. A Hegelian or transcendental approach could accept that the criteria are framework-dependent, but try to show that there was only one such self-enclosed circle. Since I have rejected that approach, we have to break the circle by appealing to something given. Yet if we appeal to independently given criteria, we face questions like "Are they guaranteed?" and "What are the criteria for your criteria?"

If analysis and description did not have their own criteria, they would be useless as data. Our problem would be solved if we could claim that there are criteria which are simply given to disciplined intuition. This would dispose of the troublesome questions. But as I indicated earlier, the problems of access to such presumed intuitions seem to me insuperable.

To the earlier question "What are the criteria for framework choice?" the last three chapters responded by claiming there was an activity of framework construction with discernible goals and a certain structure. Criteria for frameworks were drawn from this activity. The thesis-argument is basically a description of that activity, together with arguments against various misconceptions and false pictures that distort or hinder it. Now we want criteria for that description.

And that description is not a verbatim report of sample arguments. No tapes or transcripts of philosophers' discussions will by themselves tell us "what they are doing". The reports need not contain the context of shared rules and goals which make the reported activity what it is. Although, since the discussions in question are philosophical, they <u>may</u> contain attempts to formulate those rules and goals, just as we have done in this study. When we set out to describe the overall activity, we undertake the reflective task of interpreting a form-of-life. We should judge the descriptions by the ordinary criteria for such interpretations, such as accuracy, adequacy, ability to make a whole out of the various parts, and all the usual criteria for interpreting human activities as meaningful wholes. We constantly make such interpretations of individual and community activities. Exactly how we perform the interpretation is a matter of dispute today. It is very hard to describe how we are able to respond to questions like "When do we native speakers of English ask whether an action is 'voluntary' or not?" or "What does praying ...

five times a day mean to Muslims?" But we do answer them. Some philosophers appeal to privileged access and intuition, some talk of hermeneutics, others try to stay behaviourists. My only claim has been that such interpretations are not always self-evident. We can be acting according to rules that we would have difficulty formulating; and we may often end up with corrigible interpretations. But however the issue is resolved, it is not our present problem. It is enough for us to lead the question about criteria back to the fact that we do interpret activities in meaningful frameworks, even if that fact has no accepted analysis at present.

If these criteria are something given, as I claim, then the challenge mentioned earlier does appear. We might be faced with alternative sets of criteria and have to choose among them. The objection could be put as follows.

> Perhaps the 'usual criteria' you speak of are only one possible set out of many. Perhaps they are not shared, and different philosophers appeal to radically different criteria.
>
> Since these criteria influence the description of the norms for framework choice, if you want to avoid the plurality of self-enclosed, self-legislating frameworks you spoke of above, you will need a further set of criteria to decide among these new alternatives.

Normally a dispute over criteria takes place in a larger context of ordinary language and shared goals. Without this context it would not be a dispute and to settle it we must draw norms from the accepted context. But what if we

differed radically on the criteria for interpreting activities within frameworks? The criteria in question are not philosophical theses. They are part of who we are and how we live; they help make our community a community and make us a "we". If I and another person differ radically on such criteria, we will be unable to communicate, let alone share an activity as complex as philosophical argument about criteria. If our criteria are so diverse, we may not even notice each other as rational beings — may not form a "we" in any sense. The objection presupposes that we can differ radically and still communicate enough to compare criteria and raise the question which to accept. Without such communication there are no concrete alternatives to challenge our present criteria, hence the objection is empty. With such communication, we already share too much for the objection to have force. Yet, I repeat, what we share need not be an identical language, set of concepts or practices. I am not arguing, however, that there cannot be different criteria in these fundamental matters, or that the "we" formed by different rational beings might not be of varying depths; but I am denying that "we" can be faced with real alternatives which demand a real choice which goes beyond the extent to which "we" have been able to share goals and criteria.

The overall discussion of my thesis-argument does not involve fatal paradoxes of self-reference.

The third question about the thesis argument involves issues of self-reference. Some of my principles and con-

clusions threaten to destroy themselves by generating paradoxes. For example, I have made claims about all frameworks and described the structure of framework reconstruction. If I have used a metaphysical framework in referring to all frameworks, there may be a vicious paradoxes of self-reference involved in what I have said. However, I do not think that the basic task of my thesis arguments generates paradoxes.

As an interpretation of an area of language, the thesis describes a local framework, in this case, that of doing metaphysics. The description itself makes no assertions about all entities — it does not affirm any metaphysical principles. Like any description of a local framework, this one can become data for a variety of metaphysics: an ontological account of the results of my thesis-argument would be a separate activity which could be performed in a number of ways. However it would be done, there can still be some agreement on the local goals and moves of framework reconstruction, since, as I pointed out above, the criteria for judging such a description are not framework-dependent.

Paradoxes of self-reference might occur in another fashion. Just as a general theory of literature may guide my approach to a given poem, so I may be guided by general principles about reality and knowledge when I interpret the activity of framework reconstruction. As I pointed out in Chapter Four, you cannot derive necessary knowledge about frameworks from such general principles, since the principles are framework-dependent. However, an interpre-

tation might be guided by such principles. They could influence the selection of interpretative hypotheses, without themselves being asserted as premisses or evidence. It is the interpretations which are measured against the data and asserted. If different general principles suggest rival interpretations, comparison with the data may lead us to favour one interpretation. That, in turn, will lend credence to the general principles which suggested it. But the interpretation does not depend for its validity on a prior assertion of those principles.

I do not believe that the last two paragraphs exhaust the ways in which paradoxes might be generated out of talk about frameworks, but they do show that the task of my thesis-argument is not itself destructively paradoxical. A careful formulation might well uncover problems which would have to be handled by a hierarchy of meta-language or a similar device. On the other hand, I cannot rid myself of the feeling that we do not need such devices in the natural language which we use to interpret our activities, if that language is taken as a self-reflective process rather than as a series of discrete stages with discontinuous changes of rules and vocabularies. For, I think, we interpret any closed and completely specified language to ourselves in a language which shares the self-reflective qualities of the process of subjectivity as such, and never puts its full weight down on a single closed set of rules and categories such as would be needed to generate paradoxes.

Thus the description in my thesis-argument of philosophy stays within the limits it sets down.

There is a pervasive feeling behind the objections I have been considering. In one way or another, they accuse the thesis-argument of falsifying itself by speaking from beyond the limits it proclaims. In a way, they all restate Hegel's objection to Kant: to draw a limit is already to be beyond it. However, it is legitimate to draw limits "from the inside" if what we are walling out is an illusion people have taken as real. Such limits wall nothing out — there is nothing beyond except the regulative ideals. The limits we draw picture the contours of what we do, and contrast them with false self-images. I have tried to give an interpretation of how we construct and judge frameworks, and compared it with false pictures stemming from the ideal of the pure subject. In doing so, I have not claimed to be speaking with the authority of that pure subject. My statements are meant to fall under the restrictions they announce. My thesis-argument makes no claim to be a neutral meta-discourse above the strife of conflicting philosophies. Now it is true that it envisions framework reconstruction as a whole, and tries to tell us what we do when we philosophize. But what my thesis-argument describes is something above the strife of conflicting philosophies, viz. the structure of shared purposes and goals which make that conflict possible. And this may indeed transcend your or my philosophy. But what we share is an activity, not an incorrigible description of that activity. Interpretations of what philosophy is about are not privileged; they are with us amid the strife and shouting.

Appendix
THE ORDINARY-LANGUAGE ARGUMENT, CRITICISM OF ONGOING LINGUISTIC PRACTICES, AND THE BOUNDARIES AND LIMITS OF CONCEPTUAL SCHEMES

Introduction.

In the Appendix I criticize certain notions which underly the theory of conceptual framework autonomy. In general, my arguments support my previous conclusions about the viability of criticism for metaphysical systems.

As discussed in my first chapter, "Relativity and Understanding", there is a popular theme in contemporary philosophy whose central notion is that linguistic discourse is logically divided into numerous categories, both intra-cultural as with science, religion and morality, and inter-cultural as with comparative religions and anthropological studies. In this view it is claimed that an unbridgeable logical gulf exists between these various categories, so that it makes no sense to speak of evaluating or criticizing any of them — for this, the argument runs, would involve the use of irrelevant criteria from outside the particular conceptual framework in question.

I will first show that the Wittgensteinian view that ordinary language is "all right" as it is does not amount to the claim that ongoing linguistic practices cannot be criticized. Specifically, I will argue that there may indeed be inherent confusions, inconsistencies and even contradictions in an established mode of discourse. I will then argue that various discourses are not as distinctly divided into categories as the defenders of the autonomy

theory would claim; and thereby it is possible to make critical evaluations of different conceptual frameworks.

I will then show it is a mistaken idea that rationality and inference have wholly different and unique meanings in different modes of discourse. For this would mean that a reasoned inference in one mode of discourse would be unintelligible in terms of others, and thereby there would be no basis for claiming it a reasoned inference.

The autonomy of discourse thesis.

Many followers of Wittgenstein have supposed that his work has established the general validity of the claim that ordinary language is always "all right" as it is. They believe, that is to say, that the very fact that such a practice is ongoing shows that it is free of fundamental errors or confusions. In two sections of Chapter Three, I discussed this, the 'alternative program' - the view ascribed to Wittgenstein that common sense, as embodied in ordinary language, should be used as the standard for adjudicating philosophical disputes. It was argued in this view that ordinary language works effectively in getting its job done, and that ordinary language was free from philosophical paradoxes and problems. Emphasis is on the active and ongoing linguistic practice. As part of a lived language game, any correctly made comment in that situation was described as being in order as it was. The meaning of an utterance, according to Wittgenstein's view, is properly understood when seen only in this context. There is no theoretical or transcendental sense which goes beyond the practical area of the linguistic activity.

This autonomy of an internal consistency and meaning or sense applies to all ongoing linguistic practices. For example, philosophers influenced by Wittgenstein's arguments here hold that religious language is substantially in order simply because it is a well-established practice, widely engaged in by a large number of people over a long period of time. D. Z. Phillips is one who has frequently made this claim.

> The criteria of what can sensibly be said of God are to be found <u>within</u> the religious tradition. . . . They are given by religious discourse itself. Philosophy can claim justifiably to show what is meaningful in religion only if it is prepared to examine religious concepts in the context from which they derive their meaning.[1]

It follows from this position that the role of philosophical criticism is limited in certain important ways. Philosophers have often thought to expose religious language, or certain parts of it, as meaningless — as wholly without sense. But if, as Phillips claims, the concepts of religion derive their meaning from their own context, then the philosophers can hope for no such wholesale refutations. For the very fact that religious language is used, and has been used for a long time, demonstrates that its concepts do have meaning. At most the philosopher can tidy up minor

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[1]D. Z. Phillips, <u>Religion and Understanding</u> (New York: MacMillan, 1967), p. 68. For a criticism of the autonomy view of religion see: Gerald Downing, "Games, Families, the Public, and Religion", <u>Philosophy</u> 47 (1972), pp. 38-54 and James King, "Fideism and Rationality", <u>New Scholasticism</u> 49 (1975), pp. 431-450.

misunderstandings around the edges of religious language. There is no possibility of fundamental criticism which gets at the very heart of religious language.

Of course, the same claim is made for other areas of discourse beside religion. Peter Winch, as we have seen, has claimed that primitive beliefs in magic enjoy a similar immunity from criticism.

It is my purpose in the Appendix to attack in detail this claim. I will show that the mere fact that a practice is ongoing does not prove it free of errors, confusions or contradictions. Any or all of these may be found in a linguistic practice; the only way of learning whether they are present is by close examination and analysis. There is not an a priori guarantee that none can exist, and there is no guarantee of autonomy or isolation from external criticism. I will show, rather, that coherence of a linguistic practice is not an all-or-nothing question: incoherences may be present without bringing the mode of discourse to a halt, and so it may not be inferred that there are none in a continuing practice.

I will approach this task by first examining some arguments offered by those who believe that ongoing linguistic practices cannot appropriately be criticized. I hope to establish that their arguments are misconceived, and that they have misinterpreted the important thrusts of Wittgenstein's work. Second, I will examine some of the passages in Wittgenstein's published works which have been taken to show that linguistic practices are immune from fundamental

criticism, and offer alternative interpretations which avoid this unfortunate conclusion. Finally, I will consider some hypothetical examples which illustrate the nature of some of the possible infelicities which may occur in ordinary, ongoing modes of discourse.

Philosophy and the reform of language.

One philosopher who has felt deeply the problem of linguistic self-sufficiency is Helen Hervey.[2] Hervey believes that Wittgenstein's theory of 'meaning as use' commits him to the view that ordinary language is beyond the power of philosophy to modify; and yet, she notes, Wittgenstein by no means always heeded his own renunciation of linguistic reform. ". . . the Philosophical Investigations is devoted to the attempt to show just where, in Wittgenstein's opinion, ordinary ways of speaking are likely to give rise to mistaken conceptions."[3] That is, believes Hervey, Wittgenstein did attempt reform and criticism of ordinary language despite his repeated disavowals. Typically, she says, Wittgenstein adopted a behaviourist, anti-dualist approach; and yet, " . . . dualism lurks in the background of ordinary language."[4] One of his major concerns is the sort of problem that arises when language is "idling". But, asks Hervey, " . . . if words can be used wrongly, or misused, then can it be maintained . . .

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[2] Helen Hervey, "The Problem of the Modal Language-Game in Wittgenstein's Later Philosophy", Philosophy 36 (1961), pp. 333-351.

[3] Ibid., p. 350.

[4] Ibid., p. 346.

[5] Ludwig Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations tran. G.E.M. Anscombe (New York: MacMillan, 1970), # 132. (Citations to Wittgenstein's works refer to the numbered paragraphs into which they are divided).

that every sentence, even the vaguest sentence, is in perfect order?"[6]

Indeed it does seem often that Wittgenstein denies that he intends any reform of ordinary language. In Philosophical Investigations # 124 Wittgenstein says: "Philosophy may in no way interfere with the actual use of language; it can in the end only describe it. . . . It leaves everything as it is." And yet it is true that one of his major concerns was to clear up confusions of language, not all of which result from philosophers' misuse of words. The former strain, claiming that philosophy cannot 'interfere', is the basis for the conviction that Wittgenstein rules out any criticism of ongoing practices. But as Hervey notes, the latter strain, the necessity for removing confusion which actually arises, is also important.

It is my claim that in these passages Wittgenstein does not endorse everything which is said or could be said in ordinary language. Rather, he is repudiating the view that ordinary language needs to be replaced across the board, as inadequate for its purposes. He is denying that what is required is some general reform which would substitute an artificial, or formal, or systematic language for our customary speech. Certainly Wittgenstein tried to clear up mistake, confusions, incoherences, and outright contradictions that sometimes arise in ordinary speech. His point in these disputed passages was that no wholesale replacement of ordinary language with something else could accomplish this purpose.

James Carney has taken roughly this position; he says Wittgenstein " . . . devotes much . . . of his time showing

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[6] Hervey, op. cit., p. 341.

where aspects of ordinary language have misled people and have thus given rise to conceptual confusion."[7] The vagueness of our ordinary language arises not from any imperfection of our language, says Carney, but rather from the indeterminate number and complexity of human purposes. Since we are such very complicated and unpredictable sorts of beings, no conceptual structure could be developed in advance that would be guaranteed to serve all our possible needs. And so " . . . giving words strict rules is unnecessary, for our sentences in their ordinary context make sense without such rules."[8] An ideal language would be beside the point, and that is all Wittgenstein meant.

Hervey, however, remains unpersuaded by this. In a reply to Carney, she repeats her claim that there is a fundamental incoherence in Wittgenstein's thought.[9] For if ordinary language is often or even occasionally wrong or misleading, then the technique of seeking philosophical enlightenment in it is "at least open to question."[10] And in any case, she says, when we study ordinary language philosophically, we are doing more than just describing it. "We are criticizing, suggesting, innovating, and I consider that Wittgenstein was often in fact engaged in such activities."[11]

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[7]James Carney, "Is Wittgenstein Impaled on Miss Hervey's Dilemma?" Philosophy 36 (1961), pp. 167-170.

[8]Ibid., p. 170.

[9]Helen Hervey, "A Reply to Dr. Carney's Challenge", Philosophy 38 (1963), pp. 170-175.

[10]Ibid., p. 172.

[11]Ibid., p. 175. For an argument that Wittgenstein's philosophy is more than descriptive, and is in fact construction, see Mark Headlee, "Wittgenstein's Philosophy: Old and New", Dialogue 15 (1973), pp. 39-44.

The latter point, of course, is my own argument: Wittgenstein certainly did criticze, innovate, and suggest changes in some ways of speaking which are customary. It is obvious from reading Wittgenstein's work that, if he ever meant to reject the possibility of changing ordinary language, he did not always heed his own advice. But I deny Hervey's claim that there is an incoherence; and later in this Appendix I will show how some of these passages can be construed in the manner I have suggested — i.e. that they do not constitute any general endorsement of every part of every ongoing linguistic practice.

I believe Hervey fails to distinguish between overall adequacy, and adequacy for a specific purpose. Her point is that language is not rendered <u>generally</u> inadequate just because there is always vagueness and the possibility of confusion. Vagueness may cause problems in some cases, and then it can be dealt with specifically. My point is that, although ordinary language is adequate in general, there can always be these specific problems which require attention. Vagueness, ambiguity, incoherence, and contradiction may be occasionally found within this generally adequate ordinary language. Borderline cases continually arise; and as soon as new concepts are defined to take care of the borderline cases, new cases will be found which are on the borderlines of the new concepts. Our language functions despite all this.

We are concerned here more with confusion than with vagueness. More, that is to say, with questions about the

general operation of concepts than about the boundaries between adjacent ones. And here, too, our language generally functions well; problems can usually be dealt with specifically when they arise. Wittgenstein's method is to examine carefully the ways in which we speak in order to cast light on concepts. The goal of this examination is to clarify the function of particular concepts, not to eliminate all confusion from the language. It is true that there can be no general insurance against future problems; but it is impossible and useful to clarify specific confusions and incoherences.

Such confusions can and do arise within ordinary language, as well as from the philosophical attempt to understand. It is not required for ordinary purposes that language always run without a hitch; it is enough that (most of the time) it runs. When language breaks down, and we do not "know our way about",[12] then it is the philosopher's job to find the problem and correct it. When Wittgenstein said that ordinary language is all right as it is, his point is this: its occasional failures do not vitiate its usefulness, either for ordinary purposes or

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[12] Wittgenstein, op cit., # 123. In discussing Wittgenstein's alternative program, it was explained that philosophy has no business reforming language; philosophy was to leave everything as it was. This did not mean that language cannot be changed, but only that such changes must arise from concrete needs of the language users and not from abstract reflection about the nature of language. The philosopher's job then was to describe language in its everyday workings, and in doing so assemble reminders so that the actual pattern of uses is made clear to us. In emphasizing the linguistic activity Wittgenstein is not reducing the meaning of language to an isolated speech act, a psycho-physical behaviour or even to the medium of speech itself. What is stressed is rather the purposes embodied within the language activity, as expressed in the linguistic community. It is this area that is alright as it stands, for it rests on no further theoretical or transcendental ground. But there is, of course, the possibility of making mistakes in following the rules of a language game; our judgments can be mistaken, and as such we can form false beliefs. Beliefs, facts, mistaken and incorrect usage is discussed in a section below, "Criticism of belief and the im-

for philosophy. There is no need to seek a general justification for language, or a general replacement of ordinary by constructed language. Ordinary language is, in general, sufficient for its purposes; but this does not mean that nothing can ever go wrong within it.

Although incomplete ordinary language is in general adequate.

Many philosophers who have been impressed with Wittgenstein's later work have failed to recognize the importance of this distinction between the specific and the general. Wittgenstein did much to inspire the shift in emphasis from formal artificial languages to the study of natural languages; perhaps his followers were so caught up in the need to defend ordinary language that they felt they must defend every specific remark in it, not merely its general adequacy. One who appeared to do this is Alice Ambrose.[13] Ambrose argues that ordinary language is not, in any philosophically important sense, inadequate to do its job. True, there are some jobs it cannot do; but that is not a valid criticism, so long as it does its own. Arithmetic cannot do some of the jobs of higher mathematics, but it is not for that reason an inadequate arithmetic: it is altogether sufficient for the everyday purposes to which it is put, namely counting sheep, balancing checkbooks, etc. Its incompleteness is not like that of a deck of cards from which some are missing; it is more like playing a different game, for example one in which the

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[13]Alice Ambrose, "The Problems of Linguistic Inadequacy", Essays in Analysis (New York: Humanities Press, 1966).

jokers are not used.[14] Again, a road map may show no details of surrounding mountains, and so be useless to a mountain climber; but it may be a perfectly good road map nonetheless. In mathematics a notion is sometimes found inadequate for some purpose, and a new one is introduced. But " . . . there was no . . . inadequacy before the need was felt which prompted introducing a more useful notion. A symbolism cannot be inadequate so long as it does the work it was designed to do."[15]

Now this is all unobjectionable so long as it is taken in the way in which it was meant. Ambrose is quite correct in defending ordinary language against those who would replace it, wholesale, by something else. Nothing would be accomplished by this even if it could be done. But there is a danger here, arising from the fact that nothing is said to distinguish the defence of the general adequacy of ordinary language from the defence of each specific part of it. In showing that there is no use trying to replace ordinary language by something else, perhaps a constructed language, Ambrose might be taken to hold that there is never anything wrong with any part of ordinary language. Her analogy with arithmetic might seem to suggest that it is never in order for a philosopher to suggest emendations to ordinary language – that ordinary language accomplishes all its purposes, and so can never be properly criticized. But the purposes of arithmetic are determined by the nature

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[14] Ibid., p. 175.

[15] Ibid., pp. 175-176.

of arithmetic, and it is usually not difficult to tell what is arithmetic and what is not. On the other hand, as Wittgenstein has shown, the uses of language are very multifarious. Language does not have just one purpose, or even a determinate number of distinct purposes. New purposes arise, and sometimes the language is not adequate to accomplish them without revision; for the ways in which language can fail are as multifarious as the ways in which it can succeed. Ordinary language constantly changes; and philosophical analysis is one of the reasons for change, because philosophers are on the alert for problems.

When Wittgenstein says ordinary language is all right as it is, he does not mean that nothing ever goes wrong with it. He means that when problems arise the solution is to seek particular corrections. His point is that whatever changes are made, it will still be ordinary — not a formal — language that serves our ends.

Ambrose is correct in saying that ordinary language neither requires nor is capable of systematic additions that will make it complete. But the fact that no systematic correction is possible does not mean that no correction of any sort is possible.

Linguistic behaviour precedes rules and justification.

A more satisfactory account of 'linguistic self-sufficiency' is given by J. F. M. Hunter.[16] What Wittgenstein meant to claim, says Hunter, was that language stands alone,

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[16] J. F. M. Hunter, "Wittgenstein's Theory of Linguistic Self-Sufficiency", Dialogue 6 (1967), pp. 367-378.

requiring no theoretical, general justification or explanation. Linguistic behaviour precedes the rules we attribte to it; a person may use a word correctly (in fact we typically do) without having in mind any sort of explicit rule.[17] But Hunter then draws the distinction between self-sufficiency and perfection. He writes:

> It is important to understand . .. that Wittgenstein is not saying that everything that anyone says is always perfectly intelligible, and that there is never a need for explanation or interpretation . . . but only that we do not always, or even typically, need explanations of what people say, not interpret their remarks to ourselves as they say them, and we do not generally learn to use a word by learning a rule for its use, nor know a rule concerning the use of words which we use perfectly competently. The normal thing is for what we say to be understood: when this fails we explain, interpret, define . . .[18]

Language does not rest on a theoretical justification, nor is any general justification of it possible. Explanation and justification occur <u>within</u> language, and they deal with particular cases.

It is failure to recognize this, I believe, that has led some philosophers to suppose that no criticism of an ongoing linguistic practice can even be valid. It is possible to emphasize the importance of ordinary language, and yet remain critical of its occasional shortcomings.

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[17] Wittgenstein, <u>op. cit.</u>, # 82.

[18] Hunter, <u>op cit.</u>, pp. 370-371.

Wittgenstein's remarks on linguistic self-sufficiency.

In the previous section I discussed some mistaken interpretations of Wittgenstein's view of ordinary language. Now I will examine some of the passages which are taken to support this erroneous interpretation; I will show that it is not necessary, or even plausible, to construe Wittgenstein as saying that everything which is said in ordinary language is all right as it is. Thus I hope to show that criticism of existing linguistic practices cannot be ruled out a priori, and that external criticism is possible.

Wittgenstein in Philosophical Investigations says:

> On the one hand it is clear that every sentence in our language 'is in order as it is'. That is to say, we are not striving after an ideal, as if our ordinary vague sentences had not yet got a quite unexceptionable sense, and a perfect language awaited construction by us. — On the other hand it seems clear that where there is sense there must be perfect order. — So there must be perfect order in the vaguest sentence.[19]

It is easy to see how some might think this an endorsement of every sentence that occurs in ordinary language. But let us look more closely at the context. For here Wittgenstein is rejecting his earlier view that there is an "utterly simple" structure of thought.[20] In response to his earlier argument he now stresses that every sentence must have a "quite unexceptionable sense". This means, I take it, that there is nothing wrong with its sense; its sense is not deficient in some way because of a failure to achieve perfec-

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[19] Wittgenstein, op cit., # 98.

[20] Ibid., # 97.

tion. For "we are not striving after an ideal." A sentence does not take its sense from logic, seen as the "a priori order of the world."[21] This notion of logic as a picture of the world is in fact the target which this whole section of the Investigations aims to destroy.

What Wittgenstein is contrasting here is not correctly and incorrectly used sentences in ordinary language; rather, it is ordinary language and ideal language. That this is the point is clear from a comparison with a passage in the Blue Book.

> It is wrong to say that in philosophy we consider an ideal language as opposed to our ordinary one. For this makes it appear as though we thought we could improve on ordinary language. But ordinary language is all right. Whenever we make up 'ideal languages' it is not in order to replace our ordinary language by them; but just to remove some trouble caused in someone's mind by thinking that he has got hold of the exact use of a common word.[22]

Wittgenstein here is warning of the temptation to suppose that language must be "utterly simple", and "of the purest crystal", and without "empirical cloudiness or uncertainty."[23]

This temptation is very strong, but it must be avoided, for "when we believe that we must find that order, must find the ideal, in our actual language, we become dissatisfied with what are ordinarily called 'propositions', 'words', 'signs'."[24]

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[21] Idem.

[22] Ludwig Wittgenstein, The Blue and Brown Books (New York: Harper, 1960), p. 28.

[23] Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations, # 97.

[24] Ibid., # 105.

What we must do is to " . . . see that we must stick to the subjects of our every-day thinking, and not go astray and imagine that we have to describe extreme subtleties."[25] We must see that " . . . the crystalline purity of logic was, of course, not a result of investigation: it was a requirement."[26] "We see that what we call 'sentence' and 'language' has not the formal unity that I imagined, but is the family of structures more or less related to one another."[27]

All this, I think, shows that Wittgenstein was not speaking at all of the possibility of misuse of ordinary language. The argument is wholly addressed to ridding ourselves of a mistaken picture of language and logic. Its thrust is to urge us not to advance theories,[28] but rather to ask ourselves, " . . . is the word ever actually used in this way in the language-game which is its original home."[29] If Wittgenstein had intended to deny the possibility of mistakes, misuses, or confusions in functioning practices he would surely have said more on the subject than a single ambiguous sentence.

The same argument is further advanced in Philosophical Investigations # 124, another passage often cited in support of the claim that ordinary language is immune from criticism.

> Philosophy may in no way interfere with the actual use of language; it can in the end only describe it.
>
> For it cannot give it any foundation either. It leaves everything as it is.
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> It also leaves mathematics as it is, and no

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[25] Ibid., # 106.
[26] Ibid., # 107.
[27] Ibid., # 108.
[28] Ibid., # 109.
[29] Ibid., # 116.

> mathematical discovery can advance it. A 'leading problem of mathematical logic' is for us a problem of mathematics like any other.[30]

This means, I take it, that philosophy cannot interfere with the use of ordinary language in general; philosophy cannot replace the language which is used by another, more suited to the problems of philosophy — nor can it support ordinary language, either. No wholesale replacement of the language which is used is possible, and no justification of it is necessary. Wittgenstein is arguing here that philosophy must give up delusions of grandeur, its ambition to offer theories which will explain the general use of language; for language is the primary phenomenon, and the best the philosopher can do is study it closely. "What we do is to bring words back from their metaphysical to their everyday use."[31]

But this does not mean at all that philosophy does nothing.

> The results of philosophy are the uncovering of one or another piece of plain nonsense and of bumps that the understanding has got by running its head up against the limits of language. These bumps make us see the value of the discovery.[32]

In order to get clear about the meanings of the words we use we must look closely at the ways in which we use them; we must discover what went wrong when we are "entangled in our own rules."[33] The point is that such problems

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[30] Ibid., # 124.

[31] Ibid., # 116.

[32] Ibid., # 119.

[33] Ibid., # 125.

> . . . are, of course, not empirical problems; they are solved, rather, by looking into the workings of our language, and that in such a way as to make us recognize those workings: in despite of an urge to misunderstand them. The problems are solved, not by giving new information, but by arranging what we have always known. Philosophy is a battle against the bewitchment of our intelligence by means of language.[34]

When Wittgenstein says that philosophy cannot "interfere" with the actual use of language, then, he is not supposing that the philosopher has nothing to say. Rather, what the philosopher has to say is not at all what many have thought. What the philosopher has to offer is a close examination of the "workings of our language, and that in such a way as to make us recognize those workings."

Another passage in the Investigations which has often been taken to mean that ordinary language is immune to criticism is # 654: "Our mistake is to look for an explanation where we ought to look at what happens as a 'proto-phenomenon'. That is, where we ought to have said: this language-game is played."[35] But again the context does not support that interpretation, for Wittgenstein here is not talking about all language-games whatsoever, but of a particular one: psychological expressions. He is trying here to break the hold of another tempting picture, namely the notion that such expressions are depictions of inner states of affairs. We are tempted to suppose that when someone says, "I mean to do so-and-so" this means, "There

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[34] Ibid., # 109.

[35] Ibid., # 654.

is a particular process going on in my mind, namely the process of intending to do so-and-so." In order to show that this is wrong, Wittgenstein here offers several examples. "What is the natural expression of an intention? — Look at a cat when it stalks a bird; or a beast when it wants to escape."[36] The concept of intention is grounded in certain sorts of behaviour in certain contexts; when we look at the cat we do not ask ourselves what processes are occurring in its head. Even if we were interested in feline brain physiology no information about the cat's head would give us a better understanding of its intention to spring at the bird. The intention-behaviour is itself the "proto-phenomenon". That is, it does not require, and is not susceptible of, explanation in terms of some other phenomenon. "The question is not one of explaining a language-game by means of our experiences, but of noting a language-game."[37]

Wittgenstein continues: "We say a dog is afraid his master will beat him; but not, he is afraid his master will beat him tomorrow? Why not?"[38] The reason we do not say this is that a dog, having no language, is incapable of behaviour which would express fear of being beaten tomorrow. What is basic to the concept is the expression, not any feeling in the dog's head. And if one is forced to guess the meaning of a hostile glance seen out of context,

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[36] Ibid., # 647.

[37] Ibid., # 655. Also see Wittgenstein's Zettel ed. and tran. G.E.M. Anscombe (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1967). ## 313-314 and his Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics ed. and tran. G.E.M. Anscombe (Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1967), Part II, # 74.

[38] Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations, # 650.

the main thing one guesses is just the context — not anything about the inner states of those involved.[39]

The whole context shows that Wittgenstein is attacking a particular view of mental words — a view which seeks to explain them in terms of descriptions of inner processes or states. He shows that no such descriptions could play the necessary roles in our language; and so, in this particular case, what we should say is, "This language-game is played." He does not say, and there is no hint that he means, that we can never say any more about any ongoing language-game; he is making a particular point, and some have mistakenly taken him to be making a general one. Again, if it were his purpose to claim that linguistic practices are immune from criticism he would have done more than merely offer this one remark in passing.

The view that the ordinary workings of language are flawless is obviously correlated with the view that all philosophical problems are created by philosophers themselves and their "metaphysical use of words." That is, some have believed that Wittgenstein meant that problems only arise when philosophers or others use words in technical senses foreign to their native language-games; if they had only left ordinary language to its own devices all would have been well. But this is not Wittgenstein's view; it is true that philosophers have frequently been guilty of this, and have paid the price in confusion; but use of words in odd ways is not limited to philosophers; philosophical problems can arise anywhere.

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[39] Ibid., # 652.

> The problems arising through a misinterpretation of our forms of language have the character of depth. They are deep disquietudes; their roots are as deep in us as the forms of our language and their significance is as great as the importance of our language.[40]

So confusions are not always the results of bad philosophy, of metaphysical flights of fancy. Our language is shot through with potential problems; there is a built-in danger of misusing language in the ways that produce philosophical problems. If ordinary speech in everyday life were beyond the reach of philosophical criticism, what would be the source of these "deep disquietudes?" There would be no misinterpretation of language to give rise to problems in the first place. The philosopher's job involves both prevention and correction of linguistic confusion.

In this section I have tried to rebut the claim that Wittgenstein repudiated all attempts to change language in any way. Instead I have argued that the passages which have been so interpreted were really addressed to other problems entirely. So far as Wittgenstein is concerned, it is often appropriate and necessary to suggest remedies for specific confusions of language.

Criticism of an ongoing linguistic practice: Azande and witchcraft.

In the previous sections I have shown that those who claim ongoing linguistic practices cannot rationally be criticized have not proved their case. There is, there-

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[40] Ibid., # 111.

fore, no theoretical reason why we should not examine such practices for conflicts, confusions, and incoherences; there is no a priori guarantee that linguistic practices will be free of them. I will now examine some actual examples of practices which do or could exhibit such incoherences; thus I hope to cast light on the sorts of problems which philosophers might profitably seek to correct.

Peter Winch has claimed strongly that the practices of witchcraft and magic among the West African Azande is in perfect order.[41] However false, irrational, and contradictory it may seem to us, says Winch, it is in order because it operates according to the Zande criteria of truth, rationality, and coherence; since it does in fact operate perfectly well, any criticism we Western, scientifically-oriented observers may make is irrelevant. For evaluating Zande practices, argues Winch, the only relevant criteria are the criteria employed by the Azande; to impose our criteria of rationality or coherence on them is to make a conceptual error. This is because the meaning of the terms and concepts of the Azande is determined, as it must be, by their use of them; and thus because of the internal relationship of concept and context, the concepts exist autonomously, free from outside criticism. And since the Azande continue to use their concepts in these ways, this use is justified.

Winch writes:

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[41] Peter Winch, "Understanding a Primitive Society", American Philosophical Quarterly 1 (1963), pp. 307-324.

> First I must emphasize that I have so far done little more than note the fact, conclusively established by Evans-Pritchard, that the Azande do in fact conduct their affairs to their own satisfaction in this way and are at a loss when forced to abandon the practice.[42]

Obviously this is the same claim with which we have been dealing with — the claim that an ongoing, functioning linguistic practice is self-justifying, and cannot sensibly be criticized by criteria other than its own.

I have several comments to make about this claim of Winch's. First, it is important that he seriously misrepresents the situation among the Azande; according to his own primary source, Sir Edward Evans-Pritchard, the Zande practices do not function quite so well as Winch imagines.[43]

Winch bases his argument on the fact that the Azande do not choose to abandon their beliefs in witchcraft and magic, even when challenged by outsiders. They seem to find this method of life entirely satisfactory, and dismiss alternatives as lightly as we might dismiss a West African who tried to convert us to their beliefs. But, and this is crucial, there are problems with the Zande practices. A major theme of Evans-Pritchard's book is the effort to explain just how it is that the Azande come to terms with these logical difficulties. In brief, they simply do not inquire into the problems, they ignore the inconsistencies, they "have no theoretical interest in the subject."[44]

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[42] Ibid., p. 311.

[43] Evan Evans-Pritchard, Witchcraft, Oracles, and Magic Among the Azande (Oxford University Press, 1937).

[44] Ibid., p. 25.

For example, the Azande believe that every human death is the result of witchcraft or magic, they have no concept of death as resulting from natural causes.[45] Witchcraft is practiced only by those who are hereditary witches; these have within their abdominal cavities a strange stuff called "witchcraft substance". Witches are regarded as wicked, and their evil is much feared; no Zande ever confesses to being a witch. Aside from post-mortem examination of a person's body, the only method of identifying witches is by use of the so-called "poison oracle" (involving feeding poison to fowl and observing their behaviour) which governs most major decisions of Zande life.

Since no Zande will willingly admit that a relative is a witch, when a kinsman dies he concludes that the death is necessarily the result of witchcraft. Zande tradition requires that reparation be made, by monetary compensation paid by the witch or his clan, or by killing the witch directly or by magic. At the time of Evans-Pritchard's observations the Azande were under British rules, and murder was prohibited; so magical killing was considered the most honourable form of vengeance.[46]

But, as I have noted, the Azande never admit to being witches, or to having a witch in the family. So a Zande dies, and his clan practices magic to take the life of the witch who killed him (as identified by the poison oracle); but when the latter dies, as eventually he must, (the Azande seem in no hurry about these things) <u>his</u> friends and clan suppose that his death was in turn due to wicked witchcraft

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[45] <u>Ibid.</u>, pp. 26-28.

[46] <u>Idem.</u>

by person or persons unknown. They then ask the oracle to identify the witch guilty of their kinsman's death, and attempt magical vengeance in their turn, and so on.

Now, it is clear that the same death is being regarded in very different ways by different Azande: when A dies his clansmen attempt the magical assassination of B, who supposedly killed him by witchcraft; but of course B's family regard him as an innocent victim of the witchcraft of C. This fact is concealed from public view because the Azande do not reveal the identity of the witch who killed their kinsman. Thus the conflicting views do not come to light.

The conflict is not entirely hidden, however, because the prince of the district must be notified of all magical vengeance taken on witches, and of the mystical information concerning every death. Thus the prince must know that the death of any one of his subjects is simultaneously regarded by his relations as the result of some other's witchcraft, and by another clan as the outcome of their magical vengeance for the death of their relative. Evans-Pritchard reports,

> Princes must be aware of the contradiction because they know the outcome of every death in their province. When I asked Prince Gangura how he accepted the death of a man both as the action of vengeance-magic and of witchcraft he smiled and admitted that all was not well with the present day system.[47]

So it turns out on closer inspection that Zande practices are subject to just the sort of problems we might expect;

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[47] Ibid., p. 28.

those who possess all the information recognize exactly the conflicts which we recognize. The Azande, then, do not, as Winch claims, have such different criteria that there can be no communication. All that can be said is that their failure to deal rationally with their concept of witchcraft does not lead to immediate problems, and that it has been retained. And that, after all, is easily understandable if witches are not real. There is nothing here to support Winch's claim that what is irrational for us is rational for the Azande.

Another problem concerns the Zande belief about inheritance of witchcraft-substance. The Azande believe that all witches and only witches have witchcraft-substance in their bodies. Moreover, all the same-gender descendents of witches are also witches; thus all the sons, grandsons, etc. of a male witch are witches, and all the daughters, granddaughters, etc. of a female witch are also witches. Now it appears obvious that either all members of a clan have witchcraft substance in their bodies, or none do. And so if it is found when the body of one clan member is examined after death, it would follow that all living members of the same clan are witches. But the Azande do not draw this conclusion; and they do not consider that the coherence of their system is compromised when no witchcraft substance is found in the body of the son of a male witch. Moreover, says Winch, the Azande are perfectly justified in not drawing this conclusion, for it is only to us sophisticated philosophers that this conclusion logically follows. It does not follow for the Azande because logical inference is

rooted in linguistic practices, and the Zande practices do not involve this particular inference.

But again Winch misrepresents the Zande situation. It is true that the Azande are not troubled by the argument. They do not see the argument as sufficient to make them abandon their beliefs about the nature of witchcraft; their practice continues. But it is not true that it is somehow outside their conceptual scope. They are perfectly capable of comprehending its significance, and of employing it themselves when it suits their purposes. Evans-Pritchard says that sometimes a Zande who is accused of witchcraft will cite in his defence the fact that the bodies of members of his clan have been examined after death, and been found free of witchcraft substance. Therefore, the defence runs, I must not be a witch. This argument may be offered even though there have been other members of the clan who have been conclusively convicted of witchcraft.[48] It is not that, as Winch claims, the Azande reason in some manner fundamentally different from our way; it is rather that they sometimes choose not to reason at all on this subject.

In his defence of the Azande, Winch seems a bit confused as to his purpose. He defends their right not to be logical, if they wish, regarding their mystical beliefs. But this is not the same as showing that they are being logical, in a manner different from our logic. It is the latter which Winch requires to support his argument that criteria of rationality are grounded in each linguistic practice and

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[48] Ibid., pp. 123-124 and 126.

uncriticizable from outside it. And yet the Zande practice continues. It contains incoherences that lead to mistakes of fact, such as expecting witchcraft substance where none is to be found; and it contains others that lead to outright contradictions, such as believing that a death occurs for two mutually exclusive reasons. Some Azande recognize these problems some of the time; some concede that there are conflicts which they do not know how to resolve. But their mystical mode of discourse continues to function more or less successfully, most of the time. Obviously it is possible, then, for an ongoing linguistic practice to be in partial disorder; so we cannot infer a priori that all such practices are wholly coherent.

Criticism of beliefs and the importance of data.

Let us now consider the question from a slightly different angle, by looking at changes within a particular language, and a more familiar one. In Europe in the Middle Ages the belief that the earth is flat was perfectable respectable; scholars were aware that some of the ancients had believed in a round earth, for various reasons, and doubtless some shared that belief. But most men, even educated men, were content to rely on the "obvious" evidence of the senses that the earth is approximately flat. And in that day and age this mistake was harmless: no one was able to circumnavigate the globe, and probably no one much cared to.

It is true, there was some evidence to the contrary at hand; observant sailors always knew that the mast of an approaching ship appeared over the horizon before its hull; but the implication was not considered. And of course travellers were aware of the change in elevation of the stars as they travelled north or south; this knowledge was even used as a method of primitive navigation. But it was not generally remarked that this would be inexplicable if the surface of the earth were flat.

Now, it is not that these men's conceptual powers were unequal to the task of understanding the shape of the earth. Their language was perfectly capable of expressing the difference between a plate-shaped object and one shaped like a ball. They were not fools, nor was their language so very much less developed than our own.

The point is that the incoherence of their belief was not drawn to their attention by circumstances; it made no difference that most men had false beliefs about the shape of the planet; because no one had any occasion to do anything about it. The mistake was not so much a logical as a sociological one; it was easy to overlook the reasons for believing that the earth is spherical because nothing in the milieu brought them into prominence. Even the fact, if known, that Eratosthenes of Alexandria had calculated the diameter of the earth fairly accurately, using impeccable geometrical and astronomical methods, was not sufficient to break the hold of the "obvious" flatness of the earth.

In these circumstances, I want to say, it was not irrational to believe the earth flat; it was rather a failure to engage the ratiocinative process at all. The reasons against believing the earth flat were not recognized; reasons for that belief seemed unnecessary; and the incoherence did not come to the surface. Wittgenstein remarks on such a point: "It is a fact of experience that human beings alter their concepts, exchange them for others when they learn new facts; when in this way what was formerly important to them become unimportant, and vice verse."[49]

By contrast, for an educated man of today to believe the earth flat would be wholly irrational. The question cannot be stifled; it is in the ambience in a world of intercontinental passenger airplane flights. And one who is aware of the facts cannot rationally deny their consequences: the earth is, roughly, spherical. The earth has

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[49] Wittgenstein, Zettel, # 352. The disagreement between Columbus and a fifteenth-century geographer about the shape of the earth involves mistaken usage of language, i.e. they disagreed on the facts, not the meaning of words. In contrast, incorrect usage might be found in a disagreement with the question of whether a whale is a fish. Here one person is at least using the word "fish" with a different intention, and thereby incorrectly using language (as it is ordinarily used).

To maintain the above distinction between mistaken and incorrect usage we must accept the notion of consistency argued for earlier. If correct language is said to be synonymous with ordinary language then the following could be set forth. The fifteenth-century geographer spoke as most others did at that time about the earth being flat, and thus if to use a word correctly is to use it as most others do, then Columbus used language incorrectly. We don't accept this, of course, because we maintain consistency or coherence in a context extending beyond the immediate or local area of belief and practice.

no edge, and that fact is incompatible with its being flat. The reasons for believing that the earth is round are good ones, and overwhelmingly so.

They are not reasons of a new and unique character. They are not reasons which would have been incomprehensible to a medieval man; if he could have had them before them he could have drawn the same conclusions as we do. And in fact he did, as we have seen, have some of them before him. His belief was not irrational, but — and this is the point — it was not correct, either. The belief in the flatness of the earth led to no unfortunate consequences at that time; but that is not enough to make it a true belief. The incompatibility of this belief with the indisputable facts was exposed when astronomical observation became more sophisticated and systematic; and more dramatically when man sailed around the world. The old belief had to be abandoned.

The significance of all this for the present argument is this: the conceptual connections between facts, evidence, beliefs, reasons, etc. are many and various. It simply will not do to say, as Winch does, that criteria lie wholly within a particular linguistic practice; and that therefore no criticism based on other criteria is relevant. The medievals failed to recognize that certain facts were evidence for the roundness of the earth, but that does not mean that those facts were any the less conclusive evidence — either for the medievals or for us. Nor does the failure of the Azande to take seriously that incoherences

in their beliefs about magic mean that they are not real incoherences.

To illustrate the latter point, let us consider a hypothetical case in which the Zande witchcraft beliefs face problems similar to those which confronted the flat-earth theory. As we have seen, the Azande have no theoretical interest in the problems inherent in their witchcraft beliefs; but circumstances might arise which would focus attention on those problems, circumstances in which interest in them would be practical, not merely theoretical.[50] Suppose that crop failure became so common as to seriously endanger the Azande's very existence; this would in all likelihood be attributed to an increase in malicious witchcraft. So protecting themselves against witchcraft might become so important that the Azande would have to adopt new methods; they might be forced to try to expel all witches from their midst, instead of combatting each individual case of witchcraft as it comes up. What would they do? They could not apply their present beliefs about the inheritance of witchcraft substance.

The impossibility does not lie in the formal contradictions which might be written down by a logician; it has nothing to do with the form "P and not-P". It is an altogether practical impossibility. For suppose that the Azande decided to banish from their country all witches; whom would they banish? When the body of X is examined after his death, witchcraft substance is found. When the body

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[50] Wittgenstein, Remarks, Part II, # 83: "It is - I should like to say - for practical, not for theoretical purposes, that the disorder is avoided."

of Y, X's paternal uncle was examined, no witchcraft substance was present. So on the evidence of Y, X cannot be a witch; but there was witchcraft substance in his body. And on the evidence of X, Y must be a witch; yet none was found in him. In the happier days when the Azande could afford to wait until a witch caused trouble before dealing with him, this kind of contradiction was shrugged off, according to Evans-Pritchard. But now more effective methods are required if the Azande are to survive, and what can they do? They have what they formerly regarded as absolutely conclusive proof that all the relatives through the male line of X are witches, and equally conclusive proof that none of them can be a witch. And there is no way that the Azande can both banish and not banish the same man. The previously unnoticed incoherence has been brought to the surface; whatever rationalization the Azande might concoct to explain away the breakdown of the practice, the conflict cannot be resolved. Action is required, and with their present beliefs they cannot tell what to do.

Now, it might be said that I am distorting the Azande conceptual structure by speaking of "conclusive proof", and "logical incoherence" at all. But this objection would miss the point. It is true that the Azande do not have the concept of evidence, and conclusive proof, in just the same way as we do. But they certainly draw conclusions, make inferences, and reason about the world around them. They know what it is for something to be a good reason, or a poor reason, or no reason at all. And in their present scheme they have what they believe are the best of reasons

for thinking that these people are witches, at the same time they have equally good reasons for exonerating them. This kind of contradiction is not something derived from the philosophy of science; it is an entirely everyday matter.

A second possible objection is that the Azande could find some way of getting around the problem without resolving the contradiction. For example, they might arbitrarily adopt the rule that the first instance is the only one to be considered, and any future conflicting evidence will be disregarded. This is wrong for two reasons. In the first place, this is still a revision of their original conceptual scheme: the decision to ignore all future evidence was neither explicit nor implicit in their practices concerning witchcraft. It was formerly believed that when a witch was discovered his whole clan was ipso facto implicated; and since the presence of witchcraft substance was taken to be a necessary and sufficient condition of a person's being a witch, it followed that it would be present in all the other members of his clan. The possibility of conflicts between the witchcraft-substance criterion and the beliefs about inheritance was not provided for. We do not provide for the possibility that two people who know arithmetic will do the same problem and repeatedly get different answers; if this happened, and the mistake could not be found, our concept of arithmetic would be different. Likewise, if the Azande adopted the custom of ignoring all cases after the first they would also be changing their previous

concept. So even if they did this, it would support my argument that their concepts required modification.

Second, it is frivolous to suppose that the Azande will adopt my such ad hoc convention. They believe that the identification of witches is of utmost importance to their welfare; they are using every means at their disposal to learn who the witches are, and exile them; this is the whole point of what they are doing. And so they cannot afford to simply ignore the conflicting evidence; to dismiss it would not be taking the question seriously. Doctors sometimes find conflicting evidence as to whether a tumor is malignant; but they do not ignore it; on the contrary, they try to find out which is correct, because they need desperately to know. It is fundamental to the concept of evidence that it is not ignored when the question at issue is important. Any such stipulation would again be a modification of the previously satisfactory beliefs.

Notice that this argument is not predicated on any assumption that witches do not exist, or that the Azande are confused or mistaken in their beliefs that their beliefs are affected by witches. But suppose that witches do exist, in just the form that the Azande believe. Would the Azande then be incapable of dealing with the situation adequately? That is to say that if witches were a real danger in our way of understanding the evidence and its threat, in a material sense, then the Azande would soon be forced into realizing the errors in their practice. They would be deceiving themselves by arguing against the presence of witchcraft

substance when it was in fact there, on their own terms, or the opposite, depending on what criteria was used. If the belief about inheritance of witchcraft is true, then the evidence of the witchcraft substance cannot be retained. Or if witchcraft substance is taken to be the fundamental proof, then the belief about the pattern of inheritance must be revised or abandoned. If witches are a danger, as thus explained, then the Azande must develop a better method of dealing with them.

Of course, I do not suppose that the problems which are attributed to witches by the Azande are in fact caused by witchcraft. On the contrary, I even suggest that one important reason why the incoherence in Azande belief has not yet led to difficulties is precisely that witches are not a real threat, and therefore effective means of dealing with them are not required. But the significant thing is that the beliefs are incoherent, as practiced and expounded by the Azande, whether witches are real or not.

Ironically, Winch's own defence of the Azande practice seems to involve the assumption that witches are not real. As I noted earlier, Winch defends the right of the Azande not to be rational in this area, saying that they simply do not follow the implications of their beliefs to their logical conclusion. But defending the Azande in this way suggests that Winch does not believe that the Azande are right about witches at all. In effect Winch is saying, "The Azande practice is perfectly in order because they can get away with it; and of course we know they will continue

to get away with it; and of course we know they will continue to get away with it, for witches are imaginary." A failure to be rational needs no defence, if it leads to no problems. And if it does lead to problems, no defence is possible. If Winch believed that there was a real possibility that the Azande might be seriously threatened by witchcraft, their failure to deal rationally with it would loom larger in his mind.

The conclusion, I believe, is inescapable: a social or linguistic practice can exist even though it contains incoherences, so long as those incoherences do not lead to serious and immediate practical problems. Therefore it cannot be said that in this sense ordinary language is always in order as it is.

In the next section I argue that there are not radically different ways of reasoning. If the concepts we studied were limited to local areas of meaning, my argument for possible incoherence would not be founded simply by there being no immediate problem in practice. What I have suggested above is an a priori element in understanding, an assumption needed by both the alien framework and our own to establish any mode of discourse. We must assume a basic consistency of logic, otherwise we would find no significant relation of belief, practice or concept. Without general assumptions about reality and rationality, we could not identify beliefs, practices and concepts as well as translate or interpret them.

From the previous discussion we have seen the possibility of criticism and revision of ongoing linguistic practices; this is possible because there are not radically different ways of reasoning.

The previous discussion examined one alleged consequence of the notion that meaning is given by use, namely the belief that any ongoing linguistic practice must be in order exactly as it is. There is another misinterpretation of this important insight of Wittgenstein's. It is widely agreed that the meaning of concepts is closely interwoven with the practices that surround their application; and so it is often thought that reasoning, inferring, counting, calculating, etc. are relative to the ways in which they are used. Therefore, the argument runs, the particular ways in which we reason, infer, count, and calculate are not the only possible ways; some other society, for example, could easily have different, and fundamentally different ways of doing these things, so long as their other practices were also correspondingly different from ours. That is, they could count according to a different sequence, and so arithmetical calculations based on that sequence and their methods would be just as valid ways of counting and calculating as ours.

As we have seen, this conviction has been expressed by Winch, among others: he argues that the Azande are perfectly within their logical rights when they draw different conclusions than we do. We say that their beliefs about witchcraft-substance are incoherent, because those beliefs may entail that all members of a clan be witches, and also

entail that they all not be witches. But when we say this we are applying our own criteria of rationality, says Winch; and the only criteria which are relevant to evaluating the Azande are their criteria of rationality. Since the Zande criteria do not result in their drawing the same conclusions, they must be different from ours; but, thinks Winch, they are equally valid.

Of course I dispute this claim; I do not agree that it is intelligible to speak of radically different modes of reasoning from our own, or radically different patterns of calculating, etc. But I do not deny that the concepts of reasoning, counting, calculating, etc. have intimate logical interconnections among themselves and with other concepts and activities. On the contrary, I believe that these interconnections are of the first importance if we are to understand rightly what role all these concepts actually play. And it is these very interconnections among our concepts which render senseless the supposition that it is possible to reason in fundamentally different ways. Now this is not to deny that people in various times and places have had very different thoughts, beliefs, and reasons; what I deny is that they differ from us radically in form. Let me make this clear.

In the Muslim world the customs of marriage are very different from those in Christendom; a man may have four wives, and divorce them rather easily. Likewise, in feudal times, when a vassal was ordered to go to war by his liege lord, that was a good reason for him to go; it

was his duty. G. E. M. Anscombe, in Intention gives the example of a doomed Nazi who elects to spend his last hour killing Jews.[51] In each of these cases we might say, in one sense, that we do not understand why these people act as they do, for their reasons would not persuade us to act that way.

But in another sense we can understand quite readily; without being a Muslim, or a vassal, or a Nazi, we can understand that it is appropriate behaviour for them. It is not moral for a Nazi to kill Jews; but it is consistent and, in that sense, comprehensible. It is not irrational for a Nazi to spend his last hour killing Jews; if there is irrationality involved, it is in being a Nazi in the first place. The argument about the appropriateness of the action must be shifted up one level; for, given that a person is a Nazi, then killing Jews is indicated.

In another connection, Wittgenstein asks whether a man brings up his children because he has found it pays.[52] Of course not, in the usual case; yet we can easily imagine someone doing so. If there were a market for well-educated slaves, we could understand a man's rearing children for this reason; his actions would be revolting and reprehensible, but not, in this sense, incomprehensible. But suppose we are able to show him, by carefully marshalled facts and figures, that his operation could not make a profit; that costs were so high, and prices so low, that he could not in the long run come out ahead. And suppose

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[51] G. E. M. Anscombe, Intention (New York: Cornell University Press, 1966), p. 72.

[52] Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations, # 467.

he did not dispute our figures, but continued to say that he would rear children for profit. He agrees with all we have to say about the profit and loss situation; he admits that he cannot make money; yet he does not accept this as a reason for abandoning the operation. This would be a radical departure from our ways of reasoning; if a person cannot be brought to see that the impossibility of making a profit counts decisively against engaging in an activity for the purpose of making a profit, then we cannot understand him. It is no use in this case to say that he is 'reasoning differently'; we should not say that he is reasoning at all.

And so it is this type of divergence I deny; it is not possible that someone could reason in ways which we could not learn to understand, given enough information. If someone is reasoning, then we can follow his reasoning, or can come to follow it; if we cannot, then we have no right to call it 'reasoning'.

If internal criticism of an ongoing linguistic practice is possible and if from this we have seen that radically different modes of reason are not possible either, a further tenet of the autonomy theory of conceptual schemes is seen to weaken; viz., we can now argue against the belief that language is divided into numerous logically discrete conceptual schemes. The notion of disparate conceptual schemes suggests a similarity between language, ongoing modes of discourse, and formal deductive systems — a mathematical model with explicit rules of inference, where consistency is

an all or nothing affair. I will now argue that such a view is a false abstraction from the working dynamics of conceptual schemes.

Some evidence must be admitted.

I have shown how Peter Winch was mistaken in his defence of some of the practices of the Azande. The Azande have certain beliefs about witchcraft; as they themselves explain it, all witches and only witches have a certain readily recognizable substance within their bodies. Yet the conspicuous absence of this substance in those identified as witches by other criteria is not taken as significance: that is, it is not taken to count against the belief that the person is a witch. We are tempted to say that the Azande hold an irrational belief, but Winch denies this; his argument can be paraphrased as follows:

> It is true that to us, i.e. members of Western culture, that this seems to count against the rationality of the Azande practice. But this is only because we are applying our criteria of rationality; according to Zande criteria the presence or absence of this substance is clearly not important at all. What appears to be a contradiction, properly viewed, rather shows the difference between the way the Azande operate with the concept of an object and our own way. So the Zande practice is perfectly in order, bizarre though it seems to us.

Against all this I claim that the concept of an object is not a matter of choice. If we accept Evans-Pritchard's account of the Azande — that is, if we accept that these

people do in fact believe that all and only witches have this substance in their bodies — then we can not deny that its presence or absence is evidence relevant to the identification of witches.

For establishing the presence or absence of objects is a very fundamental part of language; any pattern of behaviour which did not involve it would be unintelligible to us. In the normal case the Azande identify and locate objects in just the same ways as we do: it certainly makes a difference to a hungry Zande whether there is food in his bowl or not; and he is just as able as we to tell whether it is there. If it were otherwise, if the Azande consistently failed to distinguish between the presence and absence of objects, we would find their behaviour incomprehensible; Evans-Pritchard could not have attempted to interpret their beliefs and translate their language into English.

Wittgenstein says, "What is a telling ground for something is not anything I decide."[53] What is a telling ground for believing something is built into the language: both the particular grounds for particular beliefs, and the general notion of a telling ground. That the Zande language operates intelligibly with the concept of an object is apparent from the very fact that Evans-Pritchard was able to understand their talk of objects; he was able to translate into English their words for everyday objects, and also their word for witchcraft substance. So when it is said that the Azande believe all and only witches have this substance in their bodies, it follows logically that its

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[53]Ludwig Wittgenstein, On Certainty ed. and tran. G. E. M. Anscombe (New York: J. and J. Harper, 1969), # 271.

presence or absence is important.

In saying that this is "logically" necessary, I am following Wittgenstein's usage. He states:

> What counts as an adequate test of a statement belongs to logic. It belongs to the description of the language-game.[54]
>
> So is the hypothesis possible, that all the things around us don't exist? Would that not be like the hypothesis of our having miscalculated in all our calculations?[55]
>
> Doubt gradually loses its sense. This language-game just <u>is</u> like that.
>
> And everything descriptive of a language-game is part of logic.[56]

Wittgenstein's point here, I take it, is the one I'm stressing. Conceptual schemes, or language-games, cannot operate in just any way that can be imagined; and the description of the ways in which they can and cannot operate is one of the functions of logic.

The characteristics of the language of objects include being able to tell, usually, whether a given object is present or not; and also what this presence or absence licences us to infer. It will not do simply to say that the Zande concept of objects is different, in this one point: for to say this would merely be to question Evans-Pritchard's statement about the Zande beliefs. It makes no sense to say that witchcraft substance is found in all

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[54] <u>Ibid.</u>, # 82.

[55] <u>Ibid.</u>, # 55.

[56] <u>Ibid.</u>, # 56.

and only witches, and yet its presence or absence does not make a difference. What counts as evidence is not a matter of free choice; and this is evidence.

Ordinary language is not a formal system.

Defenders of a strict autonomy theory of conceptual schemes speak as though a linguistic practice or mode of discourse is either wholly coherent, or wholly incoherent. This is a confusion and seems to have its roots in an implicitly mathematical model of language. And this view is associated with the idea that ongoing linguistic practices are always and necessarily coherent: if a practice continues to function, so the argument runs, there can be nothing wrong with it. Obviously, it cannot be wholly confused and without sense; therefore it must be altogether in order. Thus the relativists think it is not worthwhile to examine such functioning practices to see whether there might not be hidden incoherences.

Here the coherence of modes of linguistic discourse is being construed on the model of consistency within a deductive system. It is of great importance to mathematicians and logicians whether a contradiction — any contradiction — can be deduced from the premisses of a system. If one can, then stern measures are required to set it right; it is intolerable that it be allowed to stand with a contradiction as anything and everything follows with such premisses.

But is not the situation different in ordinary, non-systematic language? It is possible for incoherences to

exist unnoticed, without the practice being thereby destroyed. Failure to recognize the significance of the evidence that the earth is round was unimportant in the Middle Ages; there was no need to take account of it, and so the incoherence did no harm. Only when more accurate geographical knowledge was required for practical reasons did it become necessary to question the "obvious" flatness of the earth. Likewise, I have outlined a hypothetical case in which the incoherence in the Azande's beliefs about witchcraft substance would surface; in such circumstances the contradictions, previously unnoticed and unimportant, would present problems, and would have to be solved by modifying the beliefs in one way or another.

So it is not the case that practices are either wholly coherent, without logical problems, or else wholly incoherent and without sense. Incoherences can exist in any of the concepts of a practice; they can be peripheral and trivial, or central and crucial. In the former case, minor modification can be made to straighten out the difficulties, while leaving the practice substantially the same. The Azande might, for example, simply abandon their belief that witchcraft substance is found in the bodies of all witches; perhaps they would say that the witches had learned to expel it from their bodies by magical means, in order to avoid detection.

But if the incoherence is central, it may be that the practice cannot be substantially retained; it may be that revisions sufficient to remove the incoherence would leave

the practice so altered as to be unrecognizable. This would be the case, for example, if the Christian concept of God could be shown decisively to be fundamentally incoherent; any essential change in the concept of God would make something very different of Christianity. And there can be no advance assurance that such fundamental incoherences will not be found; only analysis of each can reveal them. Whether or not an inconsistent concept is central is not itself the issue, however. "How much and what sort of modification can a conceptual scheme tolerate and still be the same?" is, perhaps, a pseudo-question. Any modification is some change in identity. And yet there is an important distinction made; although what is fundamental and what is peripheral may vary with the history of a concept, and although change may be a matter of degree, we nonetheless feel central characteristics identify conceptual schemes. Much of Newtonian science has no immediate inconsistency in practice, in such areas as low velocity and optics. But when practical areas were extended into a new realm of velocities, new problems did arise. The ultimate resolution of this was radical, and did affect the identity of science. Thus when Newtonian physics was replaced by relativistic concepts of space-time and matter, we correctly say that there was a basic change in the conceptual scheme of physics.

Another confusion that stems from the mathematical model of language is the claim that it makes no sense to criticize whole practices. Defenders of the autonomous view of con-

ceptual schemes suppose that any criteria for criticism are contained entirely within the practice where they operate; the argument is that to attack the whole practice would be to undermine the very criteria on which the attack is based. Therefore, it is said, it is perfectly proper to criticize particular features of a practice, using the criteria of that practice, but no practice can be called into question as a whole.

Once the mathematical model is revealed and exorcized, this argument can be seen to be circular. For it assumes in advance that the only relevant criteria of criticism are those which are wholly contained within the mode of discourse; it assumes that no other criteria could possibly be relevant, just as no argument from the premisses of one deductive system could be relevant to any system based on different premisses.

But this cannot be so blithely assumed; the question is precisely whether the particular argument in question is, or is not, valid — irrespective of its origins. Now, no one denies that there are some cases of such wholly self-contained criteria; in chess the move that leads directly to check-mate is the best move, according to the criteria of chess. And here no outside criteria are relevant; none could show that some other move would be better chess. However, it does not follow that all cases are analogous to this one. When we cease to imagine that modes of discourse are like different deductive systems, we lose our assurance that whole practices cannot be validly criticized; we no longer have an advance guarantee about what kinds of logical argument can be valid.

As we have seen, it may be that incoherence will be revealed in the very most central and essential concepts of a linguistic practice. If such a crucial concept is revealed as incoherent, then that is a criticism of the whole practice. That is to say, the practice is shown to be unintelligible in its crucial aspects. Thus, whether a mode of discourse is attacked in part or as a whole does not depend so much on the source of the criticism as on its target.

Rules, reasoning and self-reference.

I have discussed the claim that there are different criteria or cannons of rationality in different conceptual schemes. Winch says,

> Something can appear rational to someone only in terms of his understanding of what is and is not rational. If our concept of rationality is a different one from his, then it makes no sense to say that anything either does or does not appear rational to him in our sense.[57]

A similar view is offered by D. Z. Phillips.

> A necessary prolegomenon to the philosophy of religion . . . is to show the diversity of criteria of rationality; to show that the distinction between the real and the unreal does not come to the same thing in every context.[58]

But as I have argued it makes no sense to speak of different criteria of rationality. They may be very different forms of speech and behaviour in different societies; but these

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[57] Winch, op. cit. p. 316.

[58] Phillips, op. cit., p. 68.

are not the result of radically different criteria of rationality - for they can be made intelligible to us. The behaviour of one group can be explained, in terms of its reasons, to members of another; when this cannot be done, then there is no point in saying that the behaviour is rational at all. This, I believe, is the case with regard to the Zande practices which I have examined: there is no reason to say that the Azande are behaving rationally, though according to different criteria than ours; it is more to our point to say simply that they are mistaken.

Further, it is a consequence of this that we should not speak of <u>criteria</u> or <u>cannons</u> of rationality at all. For there are no criteria of rationality that are not at least secondary to reasoning. What is fundamental is the recognition of good or bad reasons and arguments, and the agreement that we should go on in a certain way, for certain reasons. Thus those who speak of criteria of rationality are supposing that some formal rule lies behind the fact that we all reason in the same way; they think the rule must be logically prior to particular cases; they are putting the (logical) cart before the (particular) horse.

It is often taken for granted that there is an important difference between so-called "first-order" language and "second-order" language. First-order speech is that which typically occurs <u>within</u> the mode of discourse, and is practiced by its participants in their every day pursuits; second-order speech, by contrast, it speech <u>about</u>

first-order language.[59] Now there are two views on which this distinction assumes great importance. The first is the supposition that ordinary language is always "all right" as it is. In that case, the first-order speech is guaranteed to be in order, i.e. coherence; while the second-order speech enjoys no such assurance of invulnerability to criticism. Thus the difference between the two orders is significant. However, this position is untenable; there is no guarantee that an ongoing linguistic practice is free of incoherences just because it continues to function. And so if my argument on this has been correct, then the only other basis for the stress on first and second-order language is the implicitly held mathematical model of language which I am now rejecting. That is, the assumption which appears to operate here is that a distinction of this sort is necessary in order to avoid the paradoxes to which self-reference leads in formal systems.

But as it has been pointed out, self-reference in ordinary language need not lead to paradox, precisely because ordinary language is not a formal system.[60] In fact, self-reference is common in ordinary speech; we often remark, "This discussion is very interesting; let's go on a while after the bell", and the like. These locutions cause

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[59] The fundamental importance of this distinction between first and second-order speech is, for example, assumed by both Nielsen in his attack on fideism and by Hudson in his defence of it. See Kai Nielsen, "Wittgensteinian Fideism", Philosophy 42 (1967), pp. 191-109 and W. D. Hudson, "On Two Points Against Wittgensteinian Fideism", Philosophy 43 (1968), pp. 269-273.

[60] Karl Popper, "Self-Reference and Meaning in Ordinary Language", Conjectures and Refutations (New York: Basic Books, 1965), pp. 304-311.

no confusion; they are perfectly meaningful in their context; no one sincerely claims not to understand what a comment like this means. The problems which cause such concern to the formal logician just do not arise here. And if they do arise, as for example when I say, "I am now lying", we chuckle and go about our business. Our language is not thrown into chaos or rendered meaningless. As Wittgenstein says, no one draws conclusions from the "liar".[61] The possibility of such paradoxical sentences in no way interferes with the day-to-day functions of language: stating, questioning, persuading, disputing.

So the significance of the distinction between first and second-order language dwindles to the vanishing points. It cannot be used in the autonomy theory to rule out as irrelevant large segments of philosophical discourse; remarks about language cannot be simply dismissed without the bother of examining them closely. Rather, they must be treated in just the same way as any other philosophically significant speech, by careful attention to their logical status and consequences. Once the quasi-mathematical model of ordinary language is abandoned, the temptation to imagine a fundamental difference between first and second-order speech should subside. The very notion of language as neatly ordered into layers which do not overlap is alien to Wittgenstein's later work. In urging that we pay closer attention to the actual use of language, he says,

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[61] Wittgenstein, Remarks, Part V, # 12.

> One might think: if philosophy speaks of the use of the word 'philosophy', there must be a second-order philosophy. But it is not so! It is, rather, like the case of orthography, which deals with the word 'orthography' among others without then being second-order.[62]

This is a far more realistic picture of language and the philosophy which treats it than a theory of conceptual autonomy would allow.

Boundaries and limits to criticism.

There is one final mistake I want to discuss in the Appendix as resulting from the quasi-mathematical view of language. It should be clear from what has gone before that with the autonomy theory of conceptual schemes there are numerous frameworks, with predetermined and impenetrable boundaries. The relation of this belief to the mathematical model of language is clear: formal deductive systems are easily distinguished from one another, and each is self-contained. That is perhaps the most fundamental tenet of autonomy and relativism. And this is the basis of argument that purports to rule out as logically muddled, in advance, every effort to discover any impropriety in any mode of discourse.

Thus, the precise location of the boundaries between conceptual schemes is of central importance for the argument of the autonomy theory. These are the boundaries which limit philosophical inquiry and cross-framework criticism; any misunderstanding about their placement might lead to

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[62] Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations, # 121.

untold wasted effort if, for example, one were mistakenly to attempt philosophical criticism where it is not possible. It is said that science must not encroach on religious language; and that British anthropologists cannot intelligibly criticize the logic of other societies. But it is always assumed that there is no difficulty telling just what is scientific language, or religious language. This very important matter is, in fact, taken largely for granted.

Some defenders of autonomy have made some motions in this direction, but have failed, so it would seem, to appreciate the significance of the point for their central thesis. W. D. Hudson says,

> By mapping the logical frontiers of religious belief, I mean avoiding the confusions which arise from failure to mark off its questions and answers from those of other kinds. One such confusion is that of which apologists for or against religion are guilty when they take belief in God to be the same kind of logical thing as a scientific hypothesis . . .
>
> A great many dilemmas, connected with religious belief . . . can be resolved, when the character of religious discourse as sui generis is clearly recognized.[63]

Here Hudson plainly realizes that it is necessary to understand just what sort of business is about, what sorts of questions it can properly deal with. But this involves not only ruling out certain types of statements as improper for, say, science: e.g. attacks on Genesis based on geological

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[63] W. D. Hudson, Ludwig Wittgenstein: The Bearing of His Philosophy Upon Religious Belief (Richmond, Virginia: John Knox Press, 1968).

data. It also involves ruling out certain sorts of statements as improper for religion, too. It involves, that is, showing the location of the conceptual boundary between religion and science.

For this boundary, after all, just is the fact that some statements are proper in a religious context and others are not, and likewise for science. Some arguments are relevant to religious questions; others count for nothing there; and "mapping the logical frontiers" of any mode of discourse consists in showing what can properly be said in and about it.

So we can see now that the idea of impenetrable logical boundaries between disparate conceptual schemes begs the question of immunity. The various statements treated by logic do not come conveniently labelled "religious" or "scientific" for our benefit; this classification is part of the philosopher's task. Of course, the context often makes clear what a type of statement is at hand; religious statements are more apt to be found in sermons or creeds, and scientific statements in chemistry texts or reports on experiments.

But the context alone is not enough, for there is always the possibility that a conceptual blunder has occurred; and it is the philosopher's job to detect such misunderstandings. Such cases as the pseudo-dispute between the theologian and the geologist about the way in which the earth was formed occur when one or both parties fail to understand correctly the logic of the discourse; so the philosopher must be prepared to do more than simply look

at the source; he must examine the logical function of each statement in its turn.

This identification and description of the use of language in various areas is a major task of philosophy and criticism. And any logical barriers are discovered through such investigation; the boundaries do not precede and limit it. We do not learn that the geologist's attack on Genesis is invalid because it crosses conceptual boundaries; on the contrary, we learn where the boundaries lie by recognizing that the attack is irrelevant. Nor is there, I believe, any means of deciding on the validity of such analysis and criticism wholesale; each must be studied in the closest detail. The way sentences operate determines to what mode of discourse they belong; and so each "mode" is only revealed as it is shown what sorts of sentences are appropriate to it and which are not.

There is nothing very new or remarkable about this observation; it merely reflects the situation in much of contemporary analytic philosophy. Ryle's and Wittgenstein's dissections of the language of mental acts are among the efforts to explicate the "logical geography", or "depth grammar" of certain modes of discourse. The literature in philosophy abounds with others. The point here is that this runs counter to the underlying notion I'm criticizing, that modes of discourse are marked off before the philosopher comes to them, so that he is confined to describing what he finds already in view.

If, now, these conceptual boundaries are neither more nor less than descriptions of the sorts of arguments that are appropriate in different cases, stress on these boundaries is trivial: to say that criticism and argument cannot operate across conceptual boundaries just means that criticism and argument are inappropriate where they are inappropriate. Nothing very interesting is being said after all. The autonomy thesis becomes circular.

There is no profit in characterizing different statements as belonging to one or another conceptual scheme, except to describe the results of an analysis of their logical behaviour. We surely cannot avoid the task of philosophical analysis merely by classifying statements as belonging to different conceptual schemes. Let me take an example and illustrate just how this task proceeds.

An example of analysis and boundaries.

Christians believe that Jesus of Nazareth said and did certain things, and died on the cross. His sayings and his death have for them a different and deeper meaning than the words and death of an ordinary man; but most Christians believe that he did say and do these things in the same sense as an ordinary man, as well as in another sense. Indeed, no account can do justice to traditional Christianity which does not involve these beliefs of fact; if it could somehow conclusively be shown that Jesus did not say these things, or was not crucified, fundamental revisions would be required in the average Christian's belief.

Because these factual beliefs are so important, some Christians and apologists have taken the line that no evidence could possibly count against the Biblical account of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, because for them the Bible is the logically ultimate authority. They choose, that is, to take nothing as counting against the Bible, either in its religious statements or its historical ones. Religious beliefs are offered as evidence for historical beliefs; the authority of the Bible is set up as unassailable — not only on religious questions, but also as to the truth of statements about ordinary events in the past. This, I suggest, is an example of a logical blunder, a misjudgment of the boundaries of conceptual schemes,

Christians are here asked to accept statements about the life of Christ on the basis of the Bible, not as a piece of evidence — even the very best evidence — but as a criterion. Conflicting evidence is to be rejected out of hand, because the Christian is committed to taking the Bible as ultimate, and will count nothing as evidence against its reports. Let us see whether we can make sense of this idea. Suppose we accept last Sunday's New York Times as the logically ultimate criterion of the truth about events reported therein.

Remember that the Times is not to be regarded as evidence of what happened during that week, not even as very good evidence; it is taken as the criterion of the truth. We cannot consider any evidence that any error, distortion, deliberate misrepresentation, etc., occurred; even if the Times prints a retraction next week, this cannot count against canonical edition.

If the Times said that a certain John Smith was killed falling into an excavation at the corner of Fourteenth and Main, then we must not doubt that he was. If a hundred respectable people solemnly swear they saw him a thousand miles away, and in perfectly good health, at the time of the reported accident, this must be explained away as a conspiracy, or mass hallucination, or something. If there are buildings on all four corners of Fourteenth and Main, and the newest is twenty years old, and if thousands of people remember passing those buildings, and working in them, this is irrelevant; likewise we may not doubt that there could have been an excavation on that corner, just because it takes far longer than a week to construct a building. If Smith himself appears and testifies that he was in no accident, this proves nothing; we are not allowed even to suspect that the report of his death was exaggerated. What is printed in the Times must be accepted as the truth, and so nothing can be evidence against it. John Smith died as we are told.

Naturally, these odd consequences apply not only to Mr. Smith, but to all of us; whoever was mentioned in that Sunday Times must consult it as the final authority as to what he said and did; if he remembers it differently, his memory must be discounted.

But of course not even the Sunday Times reports everything that occurs during the week; so there is plenty of room for the operation of our normal concept of the past. Whatever was not reported in the paper may be learned about

in the usual ways: asking those who were present, examining documents, looking for physical evidence, etc. Also, events since Sunday are not included in the crucial edition, and so they may be treated in the normal manner. We have two different ways of handling statements about the past; which one we apply in a given case depends entirely on whether or not the event in question was reported in last Sunday's Times.

Clearly all this makes a mockery of the concept of the past. Nothing could be more preposterous than saying that a man's own testimony cannot establish that he is alive. When we imagine that a recent or contemporary document might be taken as a logically ultimate criterion, we see that the supposition makes no sense, though its absurdity was not so apparent in the case of the Bible. We see now that talk of "logically ultimate criteria" is simply out of place here. What counts as a telling ground is not something to be decided; it is built into the language of the past. We cannot simply choose what to regard as a telling ground and what to ignore; for if we do we fall into this sort of absurdity.

If the above argument is correct, it should cast light on the language of past events. It shows something about how the truth about past events is ascertained, and what kinds of things are good reasons for beliefs about the past. It demonstrates that books, including the Bible, can be reasons or evidence for such beliefs; but that it makes no sense to say that any one is a logically ul-

timate criterion. To hold that nothing can count against the historical statements in the Bible is to make a conceptual blunder, as a result of overlooking some features of the language of past events. What is a good ground for beliefs about historical events is not a matter of free choice. As Wittgenstein said in a similar connection, "This doubt isn't one of the doubts in our game [of speaking about the past]. (But not as if we chose this game!)" [64]

So the logical boundaries of concepts are revealed by means of philosophical analysis; they are not predetermined and labelled in advance as religious, scientific, moral, or whatever. The arguments for autonomy confuse this in arguing that criticism cannot cross conceptual boundaries: the conceptual boundaries just are the lines which show the relevance and validity of different kinds of criticism. It is perhaps useful or convenient to say that religious language is not appropriately assailed on scientific grounds; but we should remember that this is the conclusion of a logical analysis of particular arguments; it is not a piece of a priori knowledge that rules out such inquiry. We have no advance assurance that any sort of philosophical argument will or will not be valid; we can only take arguments as they come, and let the conceptual chips fall where they may. And where they "fall", I've argued, is a result of criticism and reason, not more description.

This is perhaps the most serious consequence of the autonomy theory of conceptual schemes: it blocks the path of inquiry and thus the growth of knowledge. Rather than

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64 Wittgenstein, On Certainty, # 317.

contributing to the advance of philosophy, it is an obstacle to progress. For the autonomy theory fosters the notion that limits can be set to philosophy before it has even begun to work. I have tried to show that it is not so easy to avoid the task of philosophy; and more specifically I have throughout my thesis tried to express encouragement for critical philosophy in the form of metaphysical construction.

Concluding remarks.

My aim in this thesis has been to argue for the viability of metaphysical pluralism. This was not to be a metaphysical argument establishing a pluralism of different conceptual views of the world. Rather, I wanted to explain the historical existence of the multiplicity of metaphysical frameworks as being justified in the critical synthesis between absolutism and relativism. By rejecting the dogma of ahistorical absolutism and by rejecting the sceptical despair of relativism, I tried to overcome the misconceptions of either extreme epistemology and describe the business of metaphysical system building. This business was called "reconstruction"; I described it as an action within and a reaction against a given context of language, concepts and practices. In such a way I cut through the absolute-relativistic dilemma: for since the problem situation provides a non-arbitrary standard for comparison, historical relativism is avoided; and since the evaluational problem situation develops historically, the standard of comparison is not absolute.

The problem situation presented with conflicting frameworks is non-arbitrary; the problems and issues are genuine. And it is this situation which provides a measure against which alternatives can be preferentially compared and evaluated. Alternative frameworks are competitors only because they are introduced to solve some of the same problems, and it is in reference to these common problems that an evaluation can be made — this is the acceptable element of absolutism in my thesis-argument for metaphysical pluralism. That such situations or contexts provide an objective or rational comparison of alternative frameworks, and yet are uniquely the result of historical determinations, is the acceptable element of relativism in my thesis-argument for metaphysical pluralism.

Although constantly talking about metaphysical systems, the thesis-argument developed in this study has been fundamentally an epistemological theory. I have explained how metaphysical knowledge is obtained and how metaphysical frameworks are capable of rational criticism and improvement. This analysis itself can be generalized into a metaphysical position, although I have not done this. Without speculating on the nature of any such metaphysical knowledge, it has been my sincere hope in undertaking this study to further appreciate the historical dimension of philosophical knowledge without losing any of its rational character.

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